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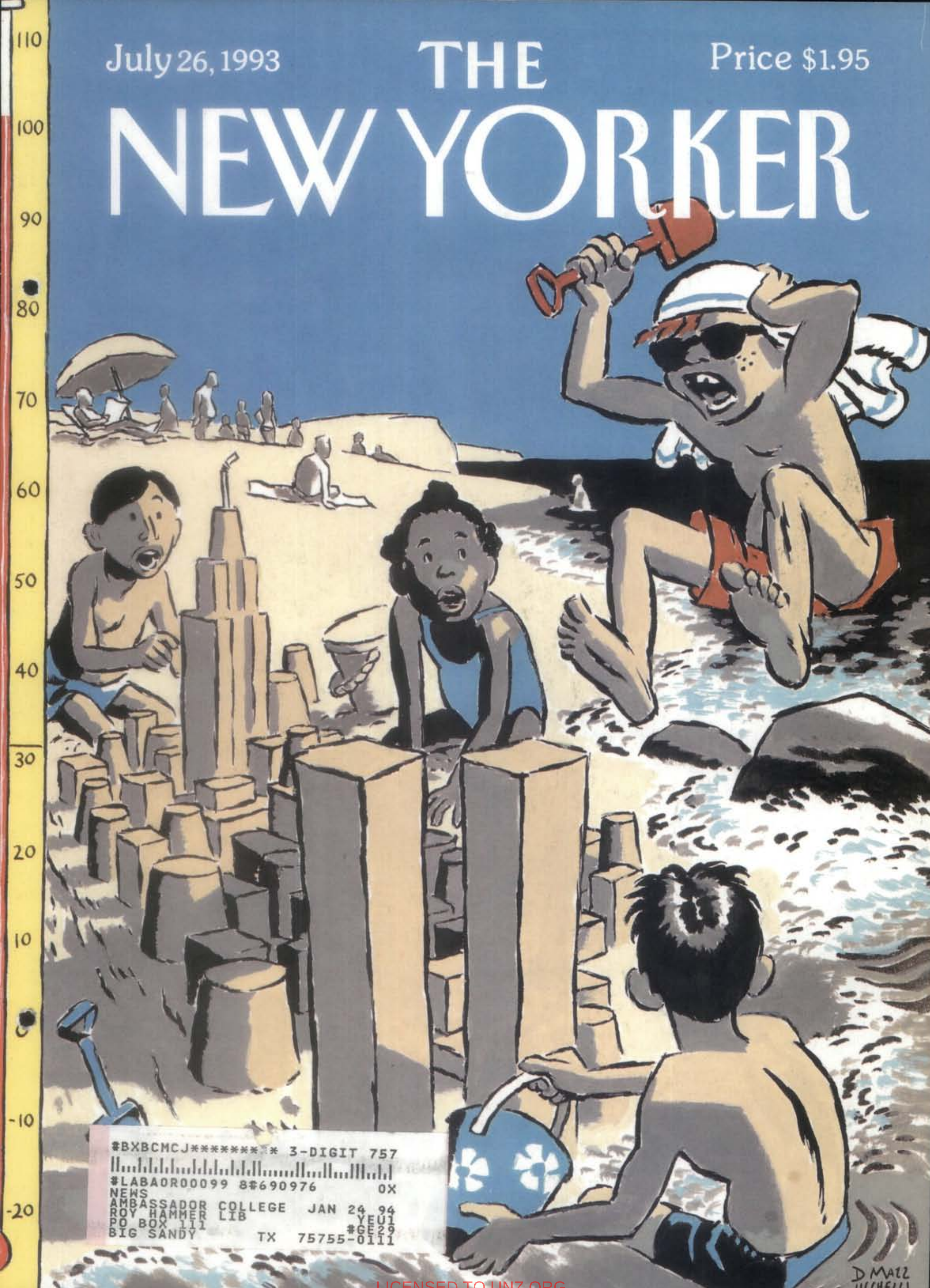
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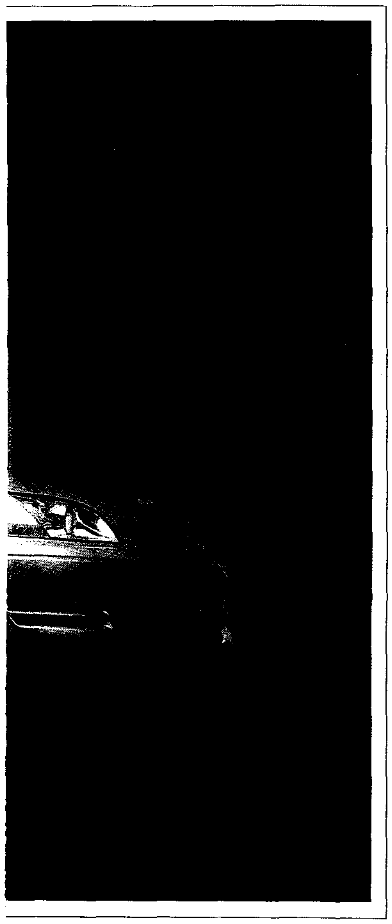

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THE NEW YORKER

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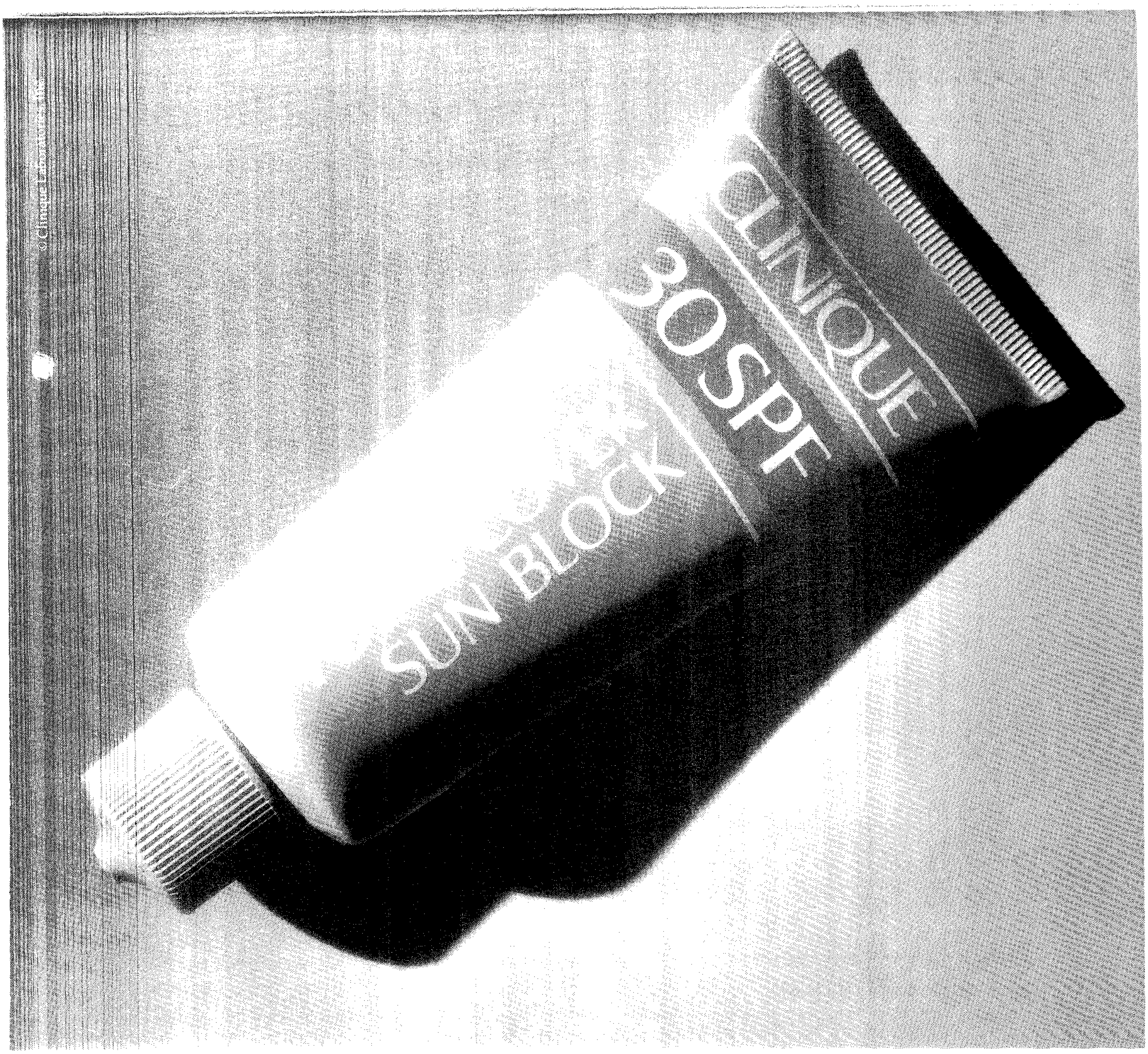

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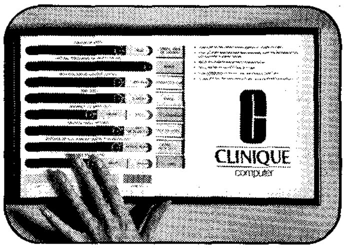

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McLean Psychiatric Hospital, 1967. A girl, "interrupted in the music of being 17..."

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COMMENT

A LAST CHANCE

THIS spring, when the Clinton Administration briefly gathered its nerve to try to stop the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, threats were made, ultimatums were issued, and the marauding Serbian forces were given pause—also briefly—in their year-old genocidal campaign against the Bosnian Muslims. President Slobodan Milošević, the Serbian nationalist who is primarily responsible for the war, agreed to cut off supplies to his murderous subordinates in Bosnia, and Radovan Karadžić, the leader of the Bosnian Serbs, even signed a peace agreement. Of course, that peace agreement was rejected by Karadžić's constituents, and the Serbs, having discovered that President Clinton's threats were hollow, resumed their grisly "ethnic cleansing" with new fury and no remaining fear of Western military intervention. Now, with the Muslims more battered than ever, and ethnic cleansing in Bosnia entering what some observers believe may be its final phase, the international community, represented by the United Nations, is reported to have started issuing ultimatums again. This time, however, it is the Bosnian government being threatened. Either the Bosnian leaders join negotiations to dismember their country or the United Nations relief agencies, which are currently helping to keep more than two million people alive, will pull out of the country, leaving the Bosnians to their exterminators.

The dismemberment—or "partition," as its proponents prefer to call it—of Bosnia has, at this stage, wide appeal. To the dedicated wreckers of the country, its charms are obvious. To the terrorized refugees being hounded from village to town to forest to killing field, it holds out a last hope of safety. To exasperated diplomats and other onlookers who simply want to see the war end and are by now convinced that Serbs and Croats and Muslims can never live together peacefully, it seems, increasingly, the only practical solution. Even the United States has come around to reluctantly accepting negotiations for partition. But the working document for these negotiations, called "the Milošević map," after its author, awards most of Bosnia, naturally, to the Serbs. For the Muslims, partition will provide, in the words of a senior analyst for the United States Committee for

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Refugees, quoted in the *Times*, an "Indian reservation/Palestinian refugee camp in which people with no political power, held in closed areas, become an international welfare case." According to a classified State Department report, the plan will force as many as two million more people from their homes. "We're talking about enormous waves of people," a State Department official told the *Times*. "Things could get much worse than they are now."

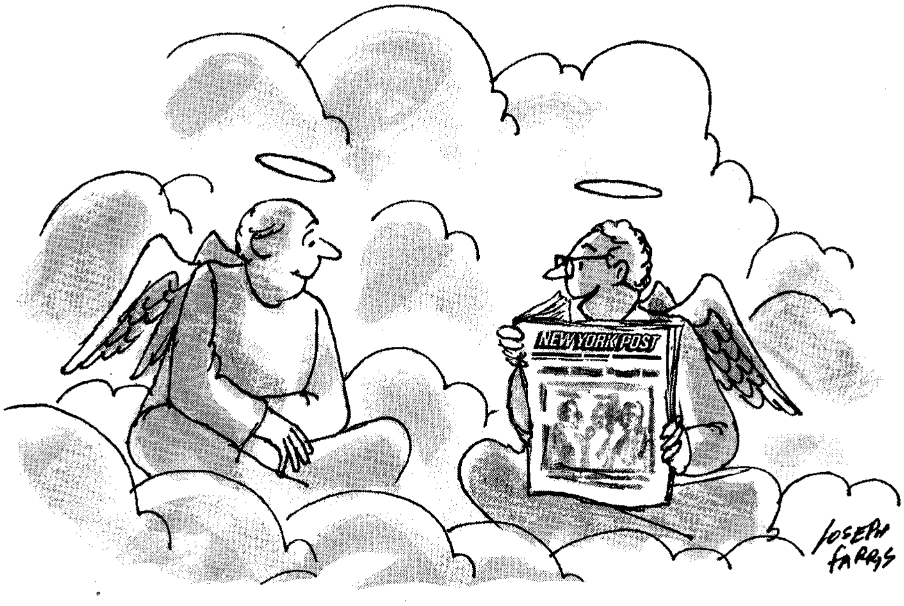
There are many unhappy precedents for this kind of scheme. In South Africa, the mad dreamers of apartheid forcibly resettled three and a half million people in a cynical hopeless quest to create a chain of ethnically "pure" states. What they created instead was untold suffering, chaos, and a ferocious new breed of petty tyrant: the Bantustan leader. Today, while black and white South Africans struggle to wake their country from the long nightmare of apartheid, Chief Gatsha Buthelezi, the leader of the KwaZulu Bantustan, has joined forces with diehard white supremacists to try to forestall the dawn of nonracial democracy. If a new constitution does not grant him sufficient power and autonomy within his ethnic fiefdom, Buthelezi has warned, he may exercise what he calls "a Yugoslavia option," and secede from a reunified South Africa. Thus do the pawns of partition schemes take on a frightening life of their own, even recognizing their fellow tribal warlords across the continents. But what South Africa and the former Yugoslavia really have in common is simply their pain and their manipulation by politicians who exploit the idea that only ethnically homogeneous societies can be successful. What is in some ways most frightening at this point in the Yugoslav tragedy is the willingness of Western governments to accept this patently false and racist idea—to agree, in effect, to the creation of Bantustans in Europe.

Within the old Yugoslav federation, Bosnia and Herzegovina was always the most multiethnic of the republics. Though the Muslims were the largest group, they did not make up a majority, and mixed marriages were common. Even today, it is inaccurate to describe the Bosnian government or Army as "Muslim," because, according to the government, more than a third of Bosnia's soldiers are ethnic Serbs or Croats. For this heterogeneity alone, the fledgling Bosnian state was perhaps doomed to be attacked by the chauvinist, expansionist regimes in neighboring Serbia and Croatia. The founding premise of international relations—that countries recognized by the United Nations shall not be extinguished and borders not be redrawn by force—is just one of the principles at stake as the Serb and Croat forces continue to carve up Bosnia. There is also the simple but crucial idea that multiethnic societies are viable. (This idea is particularly crucial to Americans, of course.)

Since cities are generally the best advertisements for heterogeneity, they have been special targets of the ethnic cleansers: Dubrovnik, Vukovar, and, above all, the famously cosmopolitan Sarajevo. Bogdan Bogdanović, a pre-Milošević mayor of Belgrade, recently wrote in *The New York Review of Books*, "What I sense deep in the city destroyers' panic-ridden souls is a malicious animus against everything urban, everything urbane—that is, against a complex semantic cluster that includes spirituality, morality, language, taste, and style."

The siege of Sarajevo, now in its sixteenth month, has lately reached new depths of barbarism. The Serbian forces in the surrounding hills, having already launched hundreds of thousands of high-explosive shells into the city, killing or wounding more than sixty thousand people, have for weeks at a time cut off water, natural gas, and electricity, creating what an American disaster-relief team, in a report to the State Department earlier this month, called "the world's largest concentration camp." Sarajevans lining up at back-yard wells provide, moreover, easy targets: a direct hit on July 12th killed twelve people and wounded fifteen.

President Clinton, watching television in Japan, was reported to be deeply upset by the news from Sarajevo. His aides duly met in Washington to discuss what might be done, but, according to the *Times*, they were unable to decide on any course of action. Actually, lifting the siege of Sarajevo would not present a major military challenge for the United States. It is a matter of securing the city's airport, which means knocking out the nearby Serbian heavy artillery. This artillery's placement is well known, and the suppression of any replacement guns would be a straightforward task for a competent air force, either American or multilateral. If the Clinton Administration is serious about its often declared desire to lift the arms embargo on Bosnia, a recaptured Sarajevo airport is the obvious place to begin the resupply of the nation's defenders. Military intervention is no substitute for the political settlement—or for the immense program of social and economic reconstruction—that Bosnia, Croatia, and Serbia all urgently need. But lifting the siege of Sarajevo now, without further dithering, would have profound symbolic—which is to say political—significance, not only for the outcome of the Yugoslav conflict but for the morale and the tenor of the entire post-Communist world. It might also save tens of thousands of lives. Certainly, as Mr. Clinton's political advisers can tell him, it would look better than threatening the weak. ♦



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JULY 30

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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THE THEATRE

Bard Garb

THOSE wishing to know who is the most eye-catching costumer in town right now should attend a performance of "Measure for Measure" at the Delacorte Theatre, where they will catch the following sights, courtesy of Toni-Leslie James: Kevin Kline, as the Duke, striding into a scene of Caribbean languor wearing a natty navy-blue blazer and creamy silk trousers; Ruben Santiago-Hudson, as the dissolute Lucio, holding court among the rabble in clothes so typically sharpie that you half expect an all-male chorus of "Luck Be a Lady" to break out; Ken Cheeseman, as poor Froth, humbly awaiting his fate in a white V-neck tennis sweater and matching baggy pants, suggesting a Keaton campus comedy; Kline again, providing a coup de théâtre with his quick change from Guido Sarducci clerical garb into a stunning white chalk-striped suit; and Karla Burns, as the bawdy Mistress Overdone, giving the play's final scene a true fashion-show flourish by emerging in an organza wedding dress and open-toed shoes, which are right in step with the production's sandal-chic footwear.

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for schedule and ticket information.)

Annie Warbucks—The sequel to "Annie." With Kathryn Zaremba, in the musical's title role, Harve Presnell, and Donna McKechnie. The book is by Thomas Meehan, the music is by Charles Strouse, and the lyrics and direction are by Martin Charnin. In previews. (Variety Arts, Third Ave. at 14th St. 239-6200.)

In the Summer House—Lincoln Center Theatre presents Jane Bowles' 1953 play, with Alina Arenal, Frances Conroy, Kali Rocha, Jaime Tirelli, and Dianne Wiest. In previews. (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

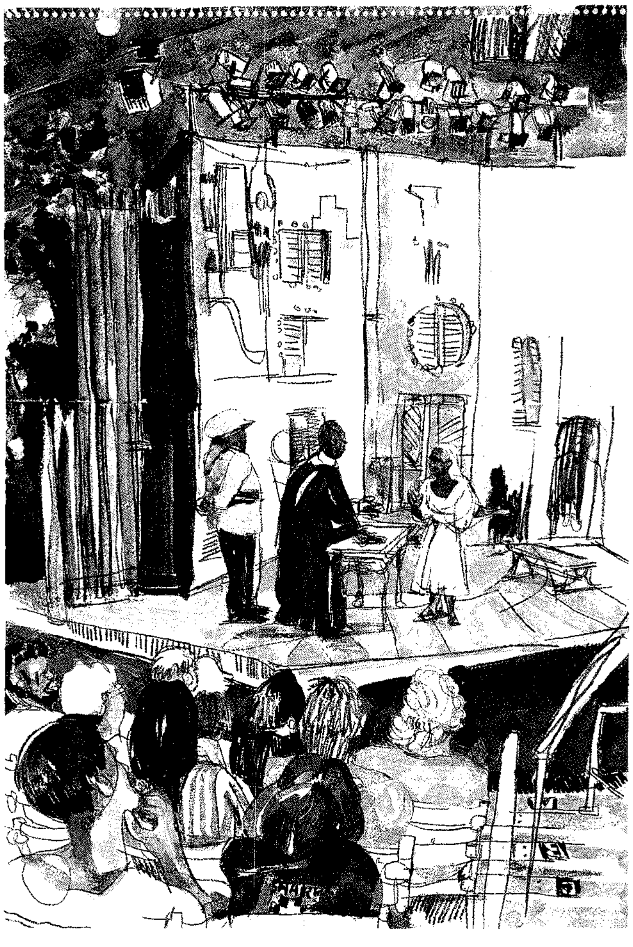
OPENED RECENTLY

Angels in America: Millennium Approaches—The first half of Tony Kushner's epic work is set in 1985, at the height of the Reagan counter-revolution, and it maps the trickle-down effect of self-interest as Kushner's characters ruthlessly pursue their private and public destinies. The Pulitzer Prize-winning play is a saga about sexual politics, death, and decency. Not to be missed. (Reviewed in our issue of 5/31/93.) (Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 239-6200.)

Blood Brothers—A glum non-musical musical, imported from Britain, about twin boys who are separated at birth. The boys later become friends, love the same girl, and die violent deaths. Willy Russell, whose credentials are good, wrote book, music, and lyrics, to no avail. With Con O'Neill, Stephanie Lawrence, Jan Graveson, and Mark Michael Hutchinson. (5/10/93) (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Camelot—"Camelot" is made of sturdy stuff, and it's a good thing, too, given this production's direction and set design. Robert Goulet rises far above his surroundings and has created a worthy successor to his Lancelot. As for the rest of the cast, between the wood-nymph ballet and the madrigal ballet and the slo-mo fights anyone would be hard-pressed to be credible. Even so, it's still "Camelot," and Goulet is convincingly Arthurian. Just close your eyes and listen. (Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 307-4100.)

Fool Moon—Bill Irwin and David Shiner are the inspired clowns in a show that is perfection itself. The only sound you'll hear is the merry music of the Red Clay Ramblers and the abundant laughter of the audience. (3/8/93) (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 221-1211.)



"Measure for Measure" at the Delacorte Theatre.

LYNN PAULEY

Forbidden Broadway 1993—Once again, a galaxy of parodies that sharpen into satire. This edition is as funny as its predecessors. Among the new shows under consideration are "Guys and Dolls" and "Falsettos," and the holdovers include "Les Misérables" and "The Phantom of the Opera." Gerard Alessandrini, as if you had to be told, is the clever writer and director, and Susanne Blakeslee, Allison Briner, Brad Oscar, and Craig Wells are the performers, doing a large assortment of roles. (1/25/93) (Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. 838-9090.)

The Goodbye Girl—Bernadette Peters and Martin Short, two brilliant, funny stars, transform this otherwise indifferent musical adaptation of Neil Simon's movie into a sporadically festive evening. Score by Marvin Hamlisch, lyrics by David Zippel. Michael Kidd directed. (3/15/93) (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 307-4100.)

Howard Crabtree's Whoop-Dee-Doo!—A cast of nine in sixteen musical numbers. (Actors' Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S. For information about tickets, call 777-7474.)

Jeffrey—A comedy, by Paul Rudnick, about love in the age of AIDS; with John Michael Higgins. It is less a fleshed-out play than a series [illegible] Scenes from Gay Life, but Mr. Rudnick can quip with the best of them. (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane. 420-8000.)

Kiss of the Spider Woman—A musical, based on the novel by Manuel Puig, with a distinguished book by Terrence McNally, a star performance by Brent Carver, as the heroic homosexual window dresser, and another by the redoubtable Chita Rivera, in the title role. Under Harold Prince's direction, the action is always lively and often witty and tender. The songs are by John Kander and Fred Ebb, the setting is by Jerome Sirlin, and the costumes are by Florence Klotz. (5/24/93) (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

Loose Knit—Theresa Rebeck has written a series of scenes about the heterosexual trials and tribulations of five New York City women who are members of a knitting circle. The scenes are funny, but they are hitched to a meandering, inconsequential plot. As in last year's "Spike Heels," however, Ms. Rebeck says very little very well. The actors are lively and believable (Mary B. Ward and Daniel Gerroll, as a sleazy bachelor plutocrat, stand out), the jokes are perceptive, and the evening is pleasant. (Second Stage, Broadway at 76th St. 873-6103. Closes July 31.)

Measure for Measure—The thirty-eighth season of free Shakespeare in the Park opens with this production, which features Kevin Kline, André Braugher, Lisa Gay Hamilton, and Blair Underwood. (Delacorte Theatre, Central Park near W. 81st St. Closes July 25. For information about tickets, which are required, call 861-7277.)

Nostalgia Tropical—A revue of Afro-Cuban music from the thirties, forties, and fifties, featuring Meme Solis. (Blue Angel, 323 W. 44th St. 262-3333.)

A Perfect Ganesh—To say that this play of Terrence McNally's tells the story of two middle-aged women from Connecticut making what turns out to be a pilgrimage through India barely indicates its richness of invention or the humor that keeps breaking through its underlying sadness. The acting does credit to the dramatist, which is saying a lot. Zoe Caldwell plays a matron, enthusiastic in manner, who is all but torn apart by strong emotional contradictions, and the primness of Frances Sternhagen, as her travelling companion, is a camouflage that almost conceals her fears and courage; in support, Fisher Stevens shows admirable adaptability as every man in the cast, and Dominic Cuskern, as the Hindu god Ganesha, is a source of innocent and not so innocent merriment. John Tillinger directed. (7/12/93) (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

Playboy of the West Indies—Mustapha Matura transplants John Millington Synge's "Playboy" from Ireland to Trinidad. That it survives the move so well is due, in part, to Mr. Matura's poetic fluency in wielding the local patois, and, in part, to the distinguished cast, under the direction of Gerald Gutierrez. With

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(Duet with Johnny Mathis)
"West Side Story"

I'VE NEVER BEEN IN LOVE BEFORE
"Guys And Dolls"

LUCK BE A LADY
"Guys And Dolls"

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Victor Love. (5/24/93) (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200. Closes July 25.)

Prime Time Prophet—A musical satire about televangelists, by Kevin Connors and Randy Buck. (Players Theatre, 115 Macdougal St. 777-7474.)

Shakespeare for My Father—A marvellous one-woman show, in which Lynn Redgrave reviews her own life in a search for her unloving father, Michael Redgrave. She combines anecdotes, brilliant thumbnail impersonations of British actors, and wry reminiscence with passages from Shakespeare, which she delivers with eloquence and emotion. This essentially serious evening is often as amusing as it is sad. (5/10/93) (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 944-9450.)

She Loves Me—This revival of the musical by Jerry Bock and Sheldon Harnick, a charmer thirty years ago, barely survives a clunky production. Even so, the score and lyrics hold up, as does the book by Joe Masteroff; the company, headed by Boyd Gaines and Judy Kuhn, as a couple of secret pen pals in a Budapest *parfumerie* in 1934, performs well, under difficult circumstances. (6/28/93) (Roundabout, Broadway at 45th St. 869-8400.)

The Sisters Rosensweig—Wendy Wasserstein's latest play, a comedy with serious undertones, is about the reunion in London of three American Jewish sisters—an international banker, a travel writer, and a wife and mother who's a professional dispenser of advice. They are portrayed by Jane Alexander, Christine Estabrook, and Madeline Kahn. The spirit of Chekhov hovers but never intrudes. Laughter is continuous. (11/2/92) (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200.)

Three Hotels—This new play by Jon Robin Baitz is no more than a technical exercise, but what technique! Debra Monk and Ron Rifkin are superb as husband and wife; the versatile Joe Mantello directed. (Circle Repertory Company, 99 Seventh Ave. S. 924-7100.)

The Who's Tommy—Pete Townshend's music—however muted for Broadway—has an indubitable thrill, but director Des McAnuff's production is caught on the horns of a theatrical dilemma that no amount of slick, exhausting spectacle can resolve. The hero, that deaf, dumb, and blind kid, is spectacularly passive, and thus unreachable, unknowable, and essentially undramatic. (5/3/93) (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

LONG RUNS

BEAU JEST: Lamb's, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780. . . . **BLUE MAN GROUP/TUBES:** Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370. . . . **CATS:** Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. . . . **CRAZY FOR YOU:** Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. . . . **FOREVER PLAID:** Steve McGraw's, 158 W. 72nd St. 595-7400. . . . **GUYS AND DOLLS:** Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **JELLY'S LAST JAM:** Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 239-6200. . . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **MISS SAIGON:** Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. . . . **NUNSENSE:** Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321. . . . **OLEANNA:** Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 307-4100. . . . **PERFECT CRIME:** Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 695-3401. . . . **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **TONY N' TINA'S WEDDING:** St. John's Church, 81 Christopher St. 279-4200. . . . **THE WILL ROGERS FOLLIES:** Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 730-8200.

DANCE

IN TOWN

Nikolais and Murray Louis Dance—In "Nikolais: Remarkable Retrospective." July 21 and July 23-24 at 8: "Crucible," "Blank on Blank," "Persons and Structures," and "Tent.". . . ¶ July 22 at 8 and July 24 at 2: "Noumenon," Suite from "Kaleidoscope," "Tensile Involvement," and "Totem.". . . ¶ July 26 at 8: "Imago.". . . ¶ July 27 at 8: "Pond," "Mechanical Organ," and "Gallery." (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Through July 31.)

DanceBrazil—In a free outdoor performance. Vogue dancer Willie Ninja, of "Paris Is Burning" fame, is also on the bill. (Central Park SummerStage, Rumsey Playfield, mid-Park at 72nd St. July 23 at 8:30. No tickets necessary.)

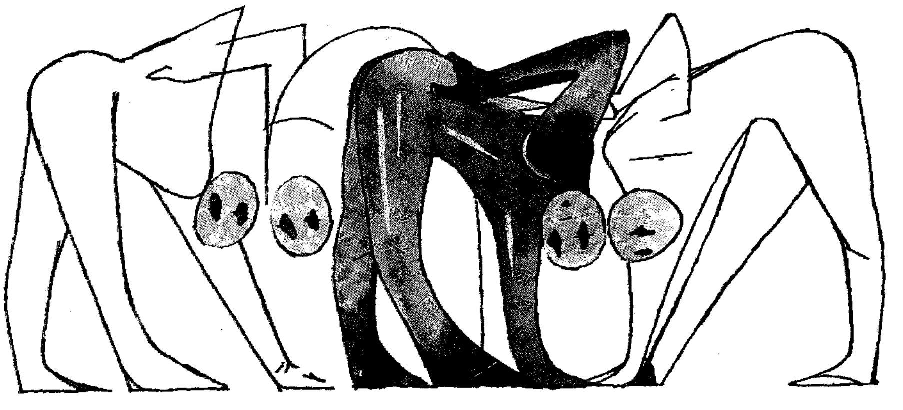
"Dances for Wave Hill"—Sham Mosher (with percussionist Glen Velez), Steve Krieckhaus, and JoAnna Shaw perform site-specific works. Presented by Dancing in the Streets. (Wave Hill, Independence Ave. and W. 249th St., the Bronx. July 21 at 6:30 and July 24 at 3. For information about tickets, call 989-6830.)

Kamala Cesar and Nandini Ramani—In a demonstration and performance of Bharata Natyam dance, the ancient temple dance form of Southern India. (Lotus Fine Arts Center, 109 W. 27th St. 627-1076. July 24 at 8.)

OUT OF TOWN

New York City Ballet—Final performances of the engagement. July 21 at 8:15, and July 22 and July 24 at 2: "Coppélia.". . . ¶ July 22 at 8:15: "Stars and Stripes," "Agon," and "Vienna Waltzes.". . . ¶ July 23 at 8:15: "Stravinsky Violin Concerto," "Scherzo à la Russe," "Sylvia Pas de Deux," and "Who Cares?". . . ¶ July 24 at 8:15: "Chaconne," "Agon," and "Who Cares?" (Saratoga Performing Arts Center, Saratoga Springs. 1-518 587-3330.)

Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival—July 21-22 at 8, July 23 at 8:30, and July 24 at 2 and 8:30: Mark Morris Dance Group. The program consists of "My Party," "Bedtime," "Mosaic and United," and "Grand Duo.". . . ¶ July 23 at 7: Miriam Mahdaviani, of the New York City Ballet, offers a work in progress. (No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ July 23 at 8, July 24 at 5, and July 25 at 7: Margaret Jenkins Dance Company. Presenting "The Gates (Far Away Near)," a new work. . . . ¶ July 27 at 8: Garth Fagan Dance. Through July 31. (Becket, Mass. 1-413 243-0745.)



Nikolais and Murray Louis Dance at the Joyce Theatre.

MICHAEL COOPER

NIGHT LIFE

Boardwalk Blast

ROCKERS seeking an exotic alternative to downtown clubs can find one in an unlikely spot: Coney Island. The Friday Night Music series at Sideshows by the Seashore (1-718 372-5159) brings noisy alternative bands and their fans to a boardwalk setting that could not be more different from CBGB or Irving Plaza. The performers play on the same stage that hosts the afternoon sideshow (fire-eater, elastic lady, etc.). The stage is surrounded by a long courtroom-style railing, and an electric chair is mounted on a platform above the stage, adding a sinister touch to the prevailing freak-show aesthetic. There is cheap beer, wooden bleachers, and old-fashioned painted signs on the walls, advertising attractions like Princess Helena, the gorilla girl. Between sets, you can check out the unpretentious collection of memorabilia at the Coney Island Museum, or just stroll along the boardwalk.

This is probably the only rock scene in New York that has a curator, a position filled by Kim Rancourt, of the Brooklyn band When People Were Shorter and Lived Near the Water. He recommends calling ahead to check on the lineup: last-minute changes are often a problem, in part because the series is booked in the early spring. The July 23 show, however, will definitely feature bands from Rancourt's label, Shimmy Disc, and from Kokopop Records. The season continues through October 3, when the final show will include a gala tattoo competition, with prizes for Best Graphic or Tribal Design and Best Tattoo of a Unique Nature.

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type is used to pick out some of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.)

Academy, 234 W. 43rd St.—A cozy former theatre, situated a few doors away from Times Square, where techno and alternative-rock bands, among others, occasionally turn up. The **BUZZCOCKS** highlight July 23, followed on July 24 by the **RAMONES,** those founding fathers of punk and the creators of such stirring tunes as "Teenage Lobotomy" and "Gimme Gimme Shock Treatment." For concert information, call 249-8870.

Ballroom, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—A cool green music hall that features a steady stream of international pop and cabaret stars, as well as the occasional drag queen. **CHARLES BUSCH** continues his open-ended run. **BLOSSOM DEARIE** is here for the early shows on Fridays and Saturdays.

Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—Jazz, mirrors, a gift shop, and, of course, those incredible shrinking aisles that turn a mid-set dash to the rest room into something of a steeplechase. July 20-25 marks the New York début of Brazilian singer **NANA CAYMMI** and her brother, the flutist-composer **DANILO CAYMMI.** Daughter

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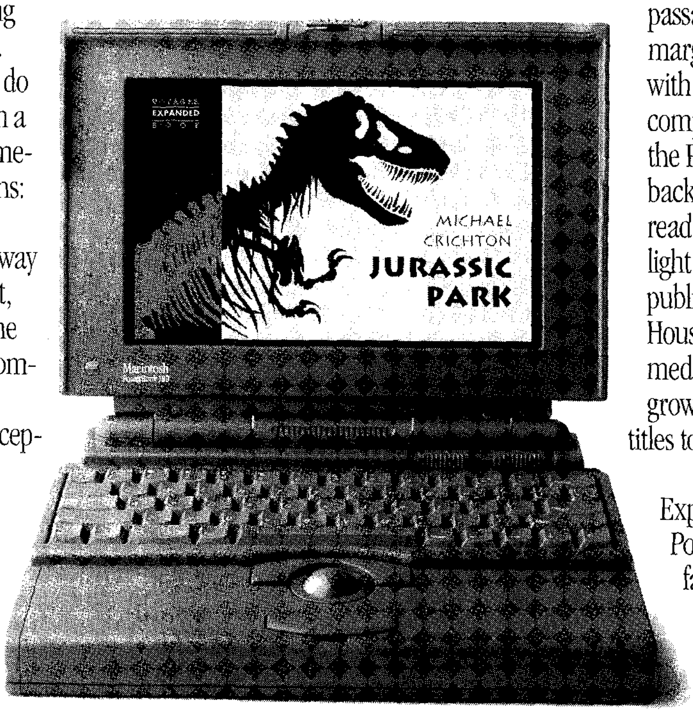

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The Friday Night Music series at Coney Island.

JOE DAVIS

of composer Dorival Caymmi, Nana—whose velvety voice has hints of Sarah Vaughan—has performed alongside such Brazilian-music giants as Caetano Veloso and Gilberto Gil. Dining.

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—A great black loft that's jammed with row after row of tables—it looks a little like the site of a standardized test. Despite the cramped quarters, though, the Bottom Line is a pleasant place to take in a show of folk or rock. **BUSTER POINDEXTER AND HIS BANSHEES OF BLUE** appear on July 23, followed on July 24 by **STEVE EARLE,** an unpredictable country rocker from South Texas, who writes great songs and runs his career like a demolition derby. Sixties-style soul sister **DARLENE LOVE** returns on July 27.

Fat Tuesday's, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7900)—One of the city's top jazz spots. But watch your head. From July 20-25, the **BENNY GOLSON** quartet swings in the spotlight. On Mondays, guitarist-inventor **LES PAUL** leads a trio. Dining.

Grand, 76 E. 13th St. (777-0600)—A cross between an old-fashioned split-level night club and a parking garage decorated for a senior prom. A serious room for serious rock-and-rolling. On July 21, **URGE OVERKILL** shares the bill with heedless British rappers the **GOATS** and the hip-hop quartet **LUSCIOUS JACKSON,** whose do-it-yourself début album is called "In Search of Manny." On July 23, Tommy Stinson, bassist for the late, lamented (and sometimes lamentable) Replacements, bounces back with a new band called **BASH & POP.** Stinson's scratchy voice and likable-brat persona meld perfectly with his back-to-basics bar-band approach.

Irving Plaza, 17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. (533-0210)—This two-floor establishment has been all things to all people: meeting hall, rock club, jazz club, Off Broadway theatre. Physically, the place is sagging a bit, but it has an odd, dingy charm. On July 22, the hip-hop-and-jazz masterminds of Giant Step present **GROOVE COLLECTIVE. LIZ PHAIR** and **YO LA TENGO** appear on July 23. Phair's début album, "Exile in Guyville," is an invigorating exercise in rock minimalism. She should fit in fine on a bill with Hoboken's wonderful Yo La Tengo. July 24 is New Zealand night, with a lineup of bands that includes **STRAITJACKET FITS.** After "Hail" and then "Melt," this band's third and most satisfying LP, "Blow," with its clattering drumbeats, straining vocals, and fiery guitars, sounds happily like Hephaestus struggling to meet a deadline.

Knitting Factory, 47 E. Houston St., near Mulberry St. (219-3055)—This modest space provides a forum for freethinking musicians. A slew of bands plays here this week, many—Captain Howdy, Liquid Hips, and Distorted Pony—with names that sound like they were made up by vicious middle-schoolers. On July 23: raw indie rock with the **GRIFTERS.** On July 24: **SYD STRAW** and **GOD IS MY CO-PILOT** appear.

Lone Star Roadhouse, 240 W. 52nd St. (245-2950)—It's named for its Texas décor, but lately a more apt name would be the Second Chance, since so many lost, forgotten, or faded rockers turn up here. **AIMEE MANN**—formerly the singer for 'Til Tuesday—will be here on July 24 in support of her début solo effort, "Whatever." Mann's croaking low notes and thin falsetto can work surprisingly effective magic on her own lyrics: just as you're about to dismiss her as another wounded waif, she wrenches a response out of you.

Maxwell's, 1039 Washington St., Hoboken. (1-201 798-4064)—Many of the bands that play here today will be playing somewhere more expensive tomorrow. **REDD KROSS'S** high-energy guitar pop promises a vibrant show on July 24.

Rainbow & Stars, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (632-5000)—Not to be confused with its richer cousin, the Rainbow Room, which is just down the hall. There you'll find expansive Art Deco glitter; here intimate nineties glitter. A Lerner and Loewe revue—"The Night They Invented Champagne"—will be here through Aug. 28. Closed Mondays.

Ritz, 254 W. 54th St. (541-8900)—This decaying theatre, once the home of Studio 54, is now the site of one of the city's biggest, oldest, and loudest rock clubs. The one, the only, the fiercely strange **GRACE JONES** appears on July 22. On July 24, the **BRAND NEW HEAVIES** evoke the spirit of seventies soul bands like the Commodores and Rufus. This interracial English group has a way with a mellow groove that has led to interesting collaborations with rap units like the **PHARCYDE** and **MASTA ACE,** which are also on the bill. Reggae singer **DENNIS BROWN** appears on July 23.

Sounds of Brazil, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—A great grass party hut with a fruit-and-bamboo motif. S.O.B.'s New Music Seminar series runs from July 21-24, featuring music from Mexico, Spain, Brazil, Africa, and the Caribbean. Latin-jazz pianist **MICHEL CAMILO** takes the stage for a three-night run beginning July 27. Closed Sundays. Dining.

Supper Club, 240 W. 47th St. (921-1940)—Upstairs at this gilt and lamé club is the Blue Room, a plush little nook with celestial wallpaper, far from the midtown racket. The diminutive **PIA ZADORA** and a twenty-two-piece orchestra, with musical direction by Vincent Falcone, perform for the next week and a half.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—This brown-toned ski chalet of a club is a fine place to study jazz-group dynamics. Through July 25, the **WORLD SAXOPHONE QUARTET** will remind us that their raison d'être is anything but mere sonic novelty. Sharing the stage with **AFRICAN DRUMS,** these musicians are funky and often astonishing. An electrified big band belonging to trumpeter **MILES EVANS** is in action on Mondays. Dining.

Time Café, 380 Lafayette St. (533-7000)—Hidden inside this trendy restaurant is a two-story club called Fez. The downstairs room, where bands perform, is rather plain in comparison, but still a sleek and comfortable spot to take in a show. The **MINGUS BIG BAND** packs them in every Thursday. The fourteen-piece ensemble concentrates exclusively on the tricky, cacophonous work of its catalyst, the late Charles Mingus. On July 23, Fez's New Music Seminar evening showcases Jeff Buckley, Chris Harford, Michael Hurley, and Katell Keineg. Dining.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—The world's most famous jazz club is also the last place in town that still looks, feels, and smells like a classic jazz club—subterranean, smoky, and thick with the spirits of past masters. On center stage through July 25 is the **JIMMY HEATH** quartet, and the **VANGUARD JAZZ ORCHESTRA** holds sway on Mondays.

Wetlands, 161 Hudson St. (966-4225)—This locus of grooviness is usually thought of as a Deadhead hangout, but the club has also been the launching pad for a generation of young New York bands like Blues Traveler and the Spin Doctors. July 23 is volcanic-funk night: **THE AUTHORITY** and **ROYAL CRESCENT MOB** will appear. On July 24, **OZRIC TENTACLES,** a British rock band, takes the trail-mix-on-tap crowd on a psychedelic journey.

EDGE OF NIGHT LIFE

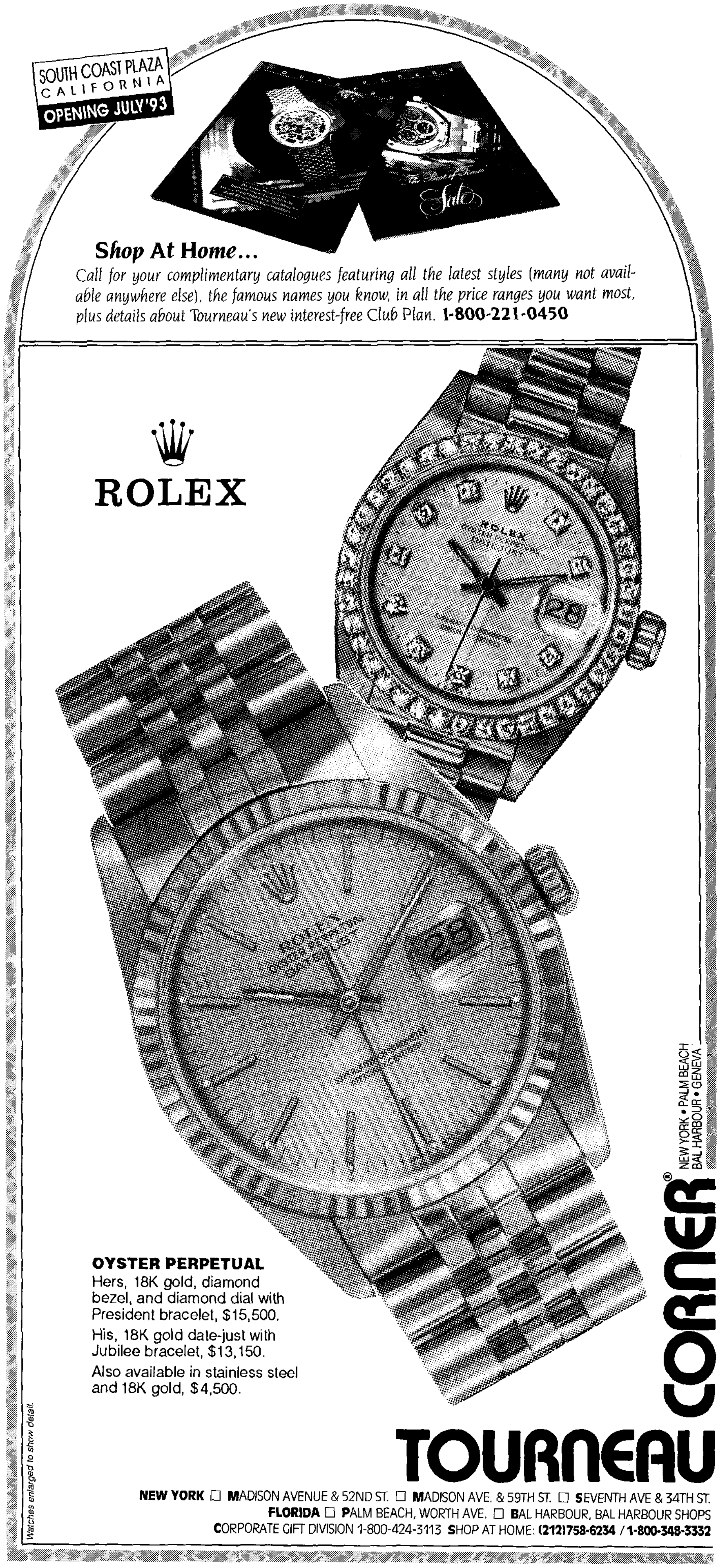
It's more than a coincidence. Could it be part of a master plan? Is Dionne Warwick doing a Psychic Club infomercial over Voice of America? How else can one explain that the only unself-consciously fun club in Los Angeles—the only one that doesn't run on audition-related energy—is a rustically ornate, Friday-night-only bar/coffeehouse/disco called Prague? And that meanwhile, in the real Prague, where it's tougher to find a health-conscious menu than it is to find an apartment, the most popular way-past-midnight spot is a streamlined, multilevel, L.A.-flavored bar/coffeehouse/disco whose phone number should be 90210? It's called Radost (Czech for "joy"). The bartender there acknowledges a tip with a "Thank you, dude," the boys sport sideburns sculpted with Luke Perry-like precision, the girls wear leggings and Western boots, and the street-level café serves carrot muffins, vegetarian pizzas, and meatless sandwiches on pita bread. "I want to go to L.A.," one of the waitresses said the other night. She wanted either "to work" or "to walk"—her accented English made it hard to tell which—on Melrose. "I hear it's the best."

IN ANOTHER CATEGORY—PERFORMANCE ART, ETC.

Gilded Cage

LINCOLN CENTER'S Serious Fun! festival endows downtown experimentation with a touch of uptown respectability. Its very title displays the sort of playful contradiction that delighted John Cage, the modern master of paradox who died not quite a year ago. It certainly appeals to pianist Margaret Leng Tan, who will survey five decades of Cage's music at the Walter Reade Theatre on July 26. An irrepressible diva of the avant-garde, she's as likely to be found plucking about inside a piano as sitting at its keyboard. In this recital, she'll employ five formulations of piano: concert grand, prepared piano (with objects inserted among the strings to alter the timbre), string piano (plucked), bowed piano (imagine removing the horsehairs from a violin bow, threading them around the piano strings, and sawing back and forth), and toy piano (a two-foot-high up-right from the nineteen-forties). Serious? You bet: she'll spend hours positioning a screw on a string to capture the precise sound the composer wanted. Fun? Undoubtedly that, too, with the pianist doubling as radio player and duck-call virtuoso in "Water Music," and with the audience, the hall, and the world outside providing the subtle overlay of sounds in two separate renditions of "4′33″," Cage's celebrated block of ostensible silence, a paean to the unpredictability of the moment.

SERIOUS FUN!—One of Lincoln Center's summer extravaganzas. At Alice Tully Hall. July 21: The Reduced Shakespeare Company (a company of three) offers "The Complete History of America (Abridged)."... July 22: The Reduced Shakespeare Company performs "The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged)."... July 23: Pomo Afro Homos, a troupe of African-American gay men, performs "Dark Fruit."... July 24: "Historias," a multimedia work by Merián Soto and Pepón Osorio.... July 27: "Twisted Roots," three performance works for the open-minded, by Instant Girl, Ain Gordon, and Ken Bullock.... ¶ At the Walter Reade Theatre. July 26: Pianist Margaret Leng Tan, performing nine works by John Cage. (All performances are at 8. For information about tickets, call 875-5050. The series continues through July 30.)



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And what about the smaller-company stocks? How will they be affected—especially if the capital gains tax for such equities is lowered as proposed (from 28% to 14% if held for five years)?

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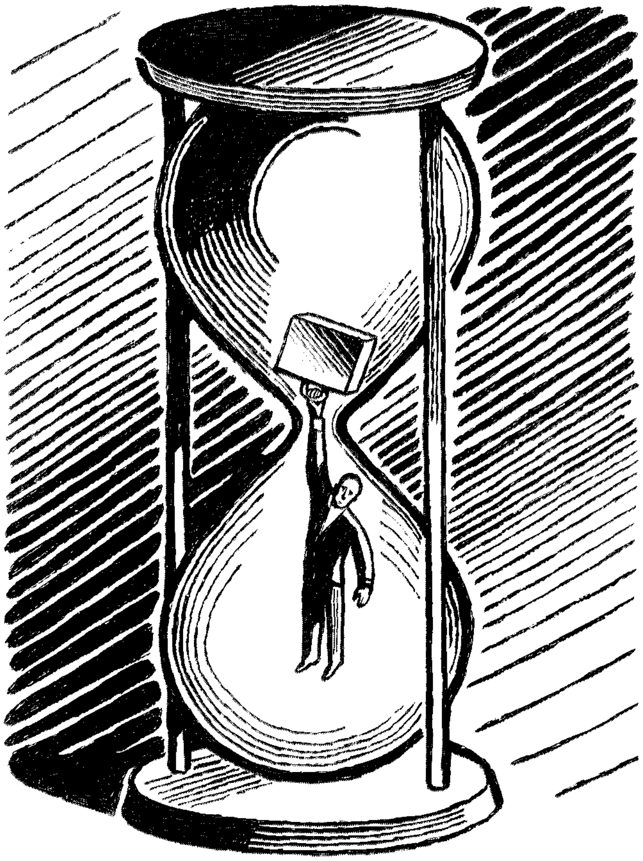

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Tax increases seem almost certain to lessen the contribution of Social Security to your retirement income. And portfolios will have to work harder to take up the slack.

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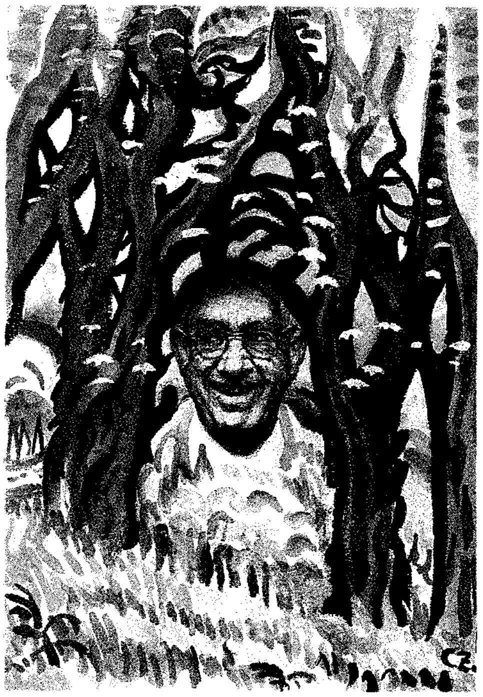
ART

Pure Provincial

CHARLES BURCHFIELD (1893-1967) spent his entire life in the near-Midwest. He was born in Ashtabula Harbor, Ohio, and later on moved to western New York; his big cities were Cleveland and Buffalo, not Paris and New York. Burchfield is, in fact, the great "inlander" of the post-pioneer generation of American artists, along with writers such as Willa Cather and Sherwood Anderson, and because his landscapes describe a now mythic region—the small-town America that Anderson set in aspic as "Winesburg, Ohio"—they have in recent years been generally disregarded, mistaken for regional clichés. His body of work, however, is both intense and eccentric, and it richly warrants the fresh appraisal occasioned by the current exhibition at the Drawing Center (35 Wooster Street; through July 30). Burchfield, a lapsed Calvinist, is a surprisingly hot-blooded painter of nature—alternately ecstatic and implosive, and closer in spirit to van Gogh than, say, to Currier and Ives. In fact, the figure that emerges from a collection of Burchfield's journal entries, recently published by the State University of New York Press, is what used to be called "highly sexed." "I find that my mind is more impressionable when I am divested of all my clothing," the artist wrote on August 19, 1914. "The same is true when we are alone in the fields."

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—"A Masterpiece of Sculpture from Renaissance Florence: Verrocchio's Bronze Statues of Christ and St. Thomas." Verrocchio's larger-than-life "Christ and St. Thomas," a Medici commission completed in 1483 and normally on view in an outdoor niche of the Orsanmichele, a granary-cum-oratory in Florence, was recently restored and sent here for a visit. Its patina, long obscured by industrial pollutants (among other accretions), is revealed to be a startlingly rich chestnut brown. (A bit of greenish oxidation remains visible on the foot of the figure of the doubting Thomas.) It's a magnificent, imposing sculpture, despite the intimacy of the scene, and a major feat of quattrocento engineering as well. The exhibition includes displays that illustrate Verrocchio's use of the lost-wax technique.... ¶ "Abstract Expressionism: Works on Paper, Selections from the Collection." This show, which features work from 1938 to 1967, seems almost comically tame in the light of Abstract Expressionism's initial reputation. Included are de Kooning, Motherwell, Pollock, Stamos, Tobey, and many others.... ¶ More than a hundred drawings from the J. Paul Getty Museum, with special emphasis on the Italian Renaissance. Included are Leonardo's delicate sketch of a child embracing a lamb (for a painting long since lost) and other works by Bernini, Bronzino, Mantegna, Raphael, and Titian. Through Aug. 8.... ¶ Forty examples of Persian tiles, from the twelfth century through the late nineteenth, in a snug, one-room exhibit.... ¶ The museum's first display devoted to historic baseball cards. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 9.)... NOTE: The roof garden, featuring six large sculptures, a great view, and cappuccino, is open when weather permits.


Charles Burchfield at the Drawing Center.

ALICIA CZECHOWSKI

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, 11 W. 53rd St.—"Latin-American Artists of the Twentieth Century." In this exhibit of more than three hundred works, one rediscovers several lesser-known figures, most notably Tarsila do Amaral (1886-1973), a lively Cubo-Surrealist painter from Brazil, and Jesús Rafael Soto, the Venezuelan whose brilliant Op constructions, famous during the sixties, seem timely again. The younger generation, including Julio Galán, Guillermo Kuitca, Jac Leirner, and Ray Smith, is especially strong.... ¶ Artists tend to have a certain flair for rest and relaxation: "Pastime in Prints," very much a summer show, includes more than seventy depictions of leisure and outdoor activities by fifty ne'er-do-wells, from Degas to Picasso to Hopper. Starts July 24.... ¶ "Multiple Images: Photographs Since 1965 from the Collection" features work by Jan Groover, Sol LeWitt, Duane Michals, and Charles Ray.... ¶ Fourteen new large-scale linoleum-block prints by Chuck Close. Starts July 24. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)... NOTE: The sculpture garden, at 14 W. 54th St., is open, free, on Fridays and Saturdays, from 6 to 10, with musical performances devoted to twentieth-century Latin America.

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—The museum presents the futuristic work of Rebecca Horn, a German artist who specializes in "mechanomorphic" installations. Horn's art incorporates all manner of objects and materials, from butterfly wings to pendulums to champagne—everything except old-fashioned paint and canvas. Among the many striking pieces here, the most ingenious is "Concert for Anarchy," a mechanized piano hung upside down from the ceiling; the piano suddenly bursts open and then slowly retracts. The Goog is also screening Horn's films, including her most recent work, "Buster's Bedroom," about a young woman's search for the spirit of Buster Keaton.... ¶ Two floors below but light-years apart, "Modern Masterpieces from the Permanent Collection," which includes paintings by Cézanne, Gauguin, van Gogh, Mondrian, Miró, and Picasso, is reassuring evidence that fine art still lives. (Open daily, except Thursdays, 10 to 8.)

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM SOHO, 575 Broadway—More than seventy paintings, watercolors, drawings, and prints by Paul Klee (1879-1940) that demonstrate the confluence of traditional German graphic illustration (wherein the "real" is often portrayed as gruesome and bizarre) and color theory in his work. This is particularly clear in "Dance You Monster to My Soft Song!" (1922), with its absurd figure levitating in a field of canary yellow. The show also features work from Klee's fertile Bauhaus period.... ¶ "Singular Dimensions in Painting," an exhibit of minimalist work, primarily from the fifties and sixties, includes Ad Reinhardt's infamous "Abstract Painting," a matte-black canvas mounted in a matte-black frame; Robert Ryman's similar white paintings; Ellsworth Kelly's aptly titled "Blue, Green, Yellow, Orange, Red"; and Mark Rothko's sombre color-field work. Through Aug. 22.... ¶ A site-specific installation by Rebecca Horn. (Open daily, except Tuesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday through Saturday evenings until 10.)

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—"Hopper in Paris" consists of twenty-five small-scale views of streets, bridges, buildings, stairwells, and courtyards that Hopper painted during three sojourns in Paris in the early nineteen-hundreds. The works are chromatically subdued, despite the ascendancy during this period of the flamboyant Fauves, but "Le Bistro," the most intense, is suffused with the blinding light of Post-Impressionist and Fauvist landscapes.... ¶ "The Subject of Rape," an installation that examines rape in art, history, law, and the media; and "Abject Art: Repulsion and Desire in American Art," which explores the use of degraded materials, impurity, and excess. Through Aug. 29.... ¶ "Hand-Painted Pop: American Art in Transition, 1955-62" includes work by Lichtenstein, Ruscha, and Twombly. (Open Wednesdays, and Fridays through Sundays, 11 to 6; Thursdays, 1 to 8.)

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY, Central Park W. at 79th St.—Black bears and grizzlies are on dramatic display in twenty-three new dioramas here; visitors can also admire a forty-claw necklace and watch video interviews with people who have survived close encounters with bears.... ¶ "The Hall of Human Biology and Evolution," a new permanent exhibition, includes a hologram of the interior of a woman's body, the world's largest array of pre-human and human fossil casts, a skeleton family watching TV, and a reproduction of an animal frieze from the cave of Lascaux.... ¶ "The Dinosaurs of Jurassic Park" features several life-size props created for Steven Spielberg, including a Tyrannosaurus rex, a triceratops, and a velociraptor.... ¶ More than fifty color photographs examining "The Pantanal: Brazil's Forgotten Wilderness," a floodplain "the size of Wyoming," home to rare and endangered animal and plant species. Through Aug. 29. (Open daily, 10 to 5:45, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

AMERICAN CRAFT MUSEUM, 40 W. 53rd St.—Organized as part of an ongoing Master Artist series, "Gertrud and Otto Natzler: Collaborations/Solitude" showcases the elegant contributions to twentieth-century ceramics of this husband-and-wife team.... ¶ A retrospective exhibition of four decades of work by artist, inventor, and teacher Paul Soldner.... ¶ "Edible Drawings" by John Cage: Experiments in handmade paper by the late composer. (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 8; Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

BROOKLYN MUSEUM, Eastern Parkway—"The Second Dimension: Twentieth-Century Sculptors' Drawings." More than seventy-five works from the museum's permanent collection, including figure drawings by Louise Nevelson and Isamu Noguchi. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

COOPER-HEWITT MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—"Czech Cubism: Architecture and Design." Through July 25. (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

That little map wasn't
worth two dead flies.

You said turn left.

Right like turn right
or right like not wrong?

Right.

You know what I mean.
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ART—Cont'd

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—"A Great Legacy: Morgan Collections, 1913-43" presents J. P. Morgan, Jr.,'s acquisitions, including medieval and Renaissance manuscripts; Gutenberg and Caxton incunabula; autograph letters by Austen, Locke, and Balzac; Rembrandt prints; and much more. Through Aug. 15. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

Museum for African Art, 593 Broadway—"Home and the World." This small show presents architectural sculpture by two African artists: Aboudramane, from the Ivory Coast, who lives in Paris, and Bodys Isek Kingelez, from Zaire, who lives in Kinshasa. Aboudramane's works, with titles like "The Reliquary House" and "House of the King's Wife," are made of straw, clay, and horn, and are apparently linked to a fantastical past. Kingelez's, by contrast, are very modern: futuristic high-rises, they borrow from African, Asian, and European architecture, and are meticulously made of painted cardboard. (Open Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, 11 to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, 11 to 8.)

New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.—"Flora Photographica: The Flower in Photography from 1835 to the Present." Much more than a collection of pretty blossoms, this exhibition of a hundred and eighty images ranges from eighteen-seventies Scowen & Company albumen prints to a great 1953 shot, by Jean Dieuzaide, of Salvador Dali emerging from the water, a pair of petals balanced on the points of his waxed mustache. Through Aug. 21. (Open Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 11 to 5:45; Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5:45.)

GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Mondays through Fridays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

Roxie Munro—Twenty-five detailed watercolors of New York, Paris, and London, some of which have appeared as covers for this magazine. Through July 31. (Images, 580 Broadway. Open Saturdays.)

César Paternosto—Twenty recent abstract paintings and seven new pigmented-concrete sculptures, inspired by the sacred architecture of the Incas. Through July 23. (Exit Art, 548 Broadway.)

Elyn Zimmerman—A few recent drawings and three big new granite sculptures, in an eternal-seeming post-minimalist style, apparently designed for outdoor settings. "Triad," suggestive of a high-tech Stonehenge, would look good at one end of a swimming pool. "Font" and "Vessel" are fountains themselves, bestilled and implacable. These are handsome but extremely impersonal works. One might almost call them designerly, as they have an air of the showroom about them. Through Sept. 11. (Gagosian, 136 Wooster St.)

"Disorderly Conduct"—A midsize, rather predictable group show on the theme of bulimia and anorexia. Maureen Connor's pieces, including specially printed paper napkins and a bathroom scale with a tiny video monitor, are among the better works on view here, along with Ken Schles's color photographs of an emaciated figure, highly aestheticized yet nevertheless shocking. Through Aug. 6. (P.P.O.W, 532 Broadway. Open Fridays, 10 to 3.)

Short List—SIAH ARMAJANI: Protetch, 560 Broadway. Through July 30. . . . **BERRISFORD BOOTHE:** Kelly, 591 Broadway. Through July 31. . . . **KERRI SCHARLIN:** Postmasters, 80 Greene St. Through July 24. . . . **REGINA SILVEIRA:** Ledisflam, 130 Prince St. Through July 30.

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

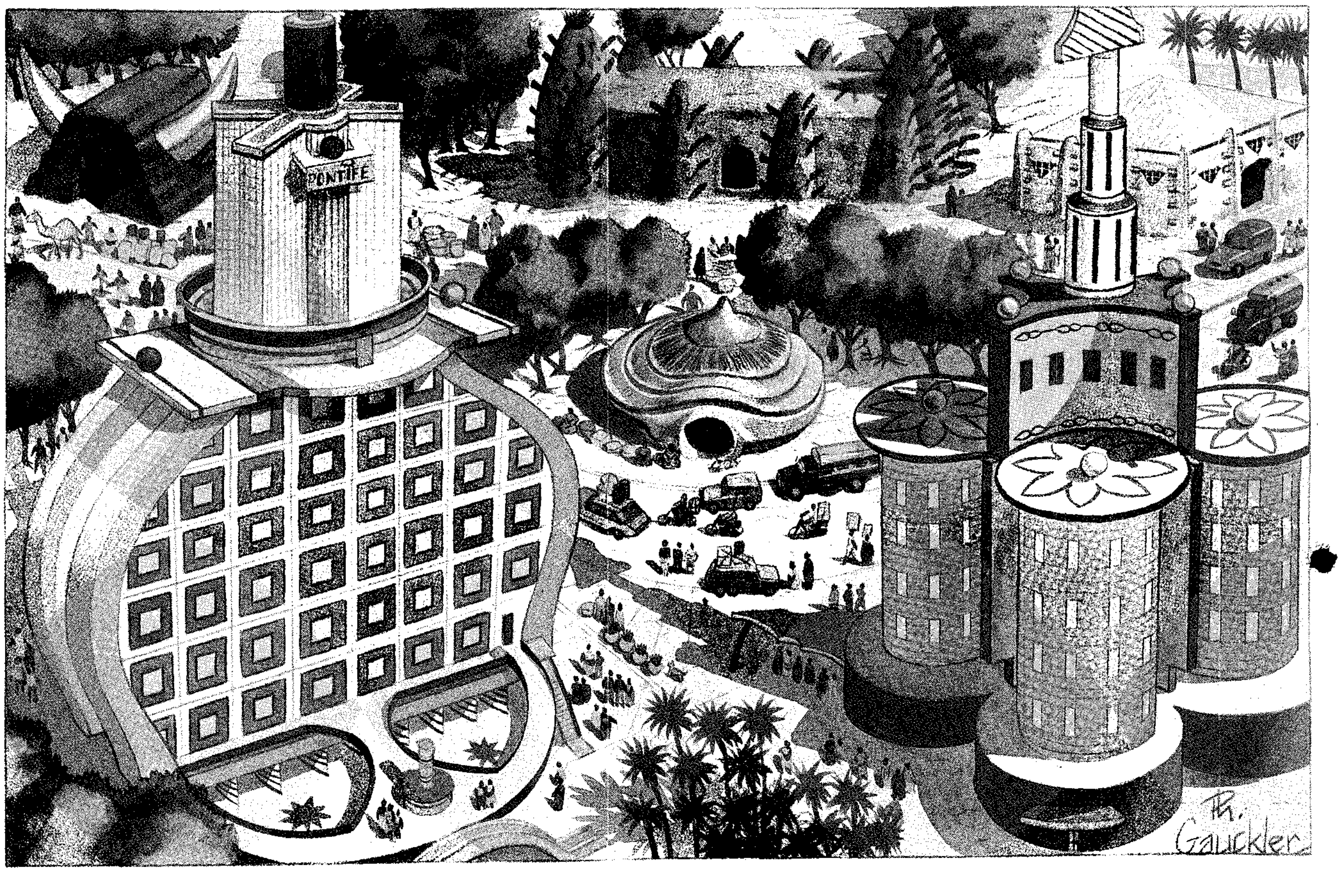
Charles Krafft—This Seattle-based artist paints disaster scenes—train wrecks, the bombing of Dresden—on blue-and-white delftware purchased at flea markets and garage sales. Through July 30. (Clark, 24 W. 57th St.)

"Neither East nor West"—The idea behind this exhilarating, intelligent show is that it makes no sense to describe contemporary artists as either Eastern or Western, and, indeed, the works on display, from New York artists of both backgrounds, reflect cosmopolitan influences and offer universal appeal. Walasse Ting's charming triptych treats Chinese subjects in a Fauvist manner; the titles of Nam June Paik's playful constructions refer to Easter Island and Helen of Troy; Nancy Graves' colorful, exuberant metal sculptures resemble high-tech botany; Wen-Ying Tsai's installation is a magic flower whose petals throb to a beat, like a frog-band toy; Tom Wesselmann's aluminum cutouts, particularly "Still Life with Two Matisses (Charcoal)," are full of wit; best of all are David Diao's provocative, amusing "Plus" and "Minus," which incorporate magazine pages containing pretentious, overcomplicated reviews of his simple geometric-abstract work. Through July [illegible] (Taipei, 1221 Sixth Ave., at 49th St.)

Short List—JOHN ADAMS/PAUL WEINGARTEN: Salander-O'Reilly, 20 E. 79th St. Through July 30. . . . **WALTER HATKE/KEITH JACOBSHAGEN:** Babcock, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Through July 30.

OTHER VENUES

"Forty-second Street Art Project"—The Forty-second Street Development project and Creative Time, a nonprofit organization for public art, have invited twenty-four artists and teams to decorate the largely vacant stretch of Forty-second Street west of Seventh Avenue. Most of the artists have endeavored to integrate their projects with the environment, so that they are neither clearly art nor clearly urban accident. Jenny Holzer steals the show, as she often does, with her simple yet maddening "truisms"—such as "A lot of professionals are crackpots"—displayed on ten movie-theatre marquees. Other works include a window display by Jane Dickson, which features paintings of brides and a revolving gown that should keep both curious passersby and Duchamp enthusiasts amused; and Tom Otterness's bronze sidewalk sculpture of a big penny upon which trolls are frolicking.



"Home and the World" at the Museum for African Art.

PHILIPPE GAUCKLER

"Monumental Propaganda"—Self-styled instigators Vitaly Komar and Alexander Melamid have invited an international cast of more than a hundred and fifty artists to envision the future of Soviet monuments. Their drawings, sketches, photographs, and written proposals—a preview of which recently appeared in this magazine—are witty and irreverent. Starts July 22. (Courtyard Gallery, World Financial Center.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

Open to the East

It's a shame that we don't have more opportunities to see what's been going on in photography in Japan, because there has been much that is fascinating and memorable. The exhibition of photographs from the seventies by Daido Moriyama (Laurence Miller, 138 Spring Street; through August 13) offers a chance to discover a major figure in Japanese photography. Moriyama's work is not unknown in this country—it was first shown in 1974 at MOMA—but his photographs are certainly not as familiar as they should be.

Many of the pictures in this show echo the imagery and sensibility of Western beacons, like Eugène Atget, Walker Evans, Lee Friedlander, and William Klein, as well as of leaders in Japanese photography, such as Eikoh Hosoe—but that doesn't mean that Moriyama's work is derivative. On the contrary, it has a strong sense of identity, and it is dynamically expressive of postwar Japan. In fact, it is this double connection—a connection that Moriyama obviously felt to other photographers as well as to his own culture—that makes his images both active and reflective. The essence of Japanese pop culture is in some of his graphics-strong street photographs. There is a beautiful stillness in his landscape pictures, and there are flashes of lurking wildness in his shots of dogs who are anything but cute.

Margaret Morton/Skeet McAuley—Morton's black-and-white photographs of shanties in New York capture the architectural resourcefulness of the men and women who built them. In her pictures, rubble and discarded wood can be as powerful as marble. / McAuley takes huge color shots of oasis-like golf courses in the arid Southwest. Through Sept. 4. (Lowinsky, 575 Broadway.)

International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St.—"Outside the Dream: Child Poverty in America." Seventy black-and-white works by photojournalist Stephen Shames. . . . ¶ Collaborative Polaroids by artists and teen-agers from New York City. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

International Center of Photography Midtown, Sixth Ave. at 43rd St.—"One Hundred Years of Broadway." (Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

Short List—**neelon crawford:** Witkin, 415 West Broadway. Through Aug. 27. . . . **francois kollar:** Zabriskie, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Through Sept. 18. . . . **tomio seike:** Gallery 292, 120 Wooster St. Through July 30. . . . **minayoshi takada:** Houk Friedman, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St. Through Sept. 10. . . . **sabine weiss/bruce cratsley:** Greenberg, 120 Wooster St. Through July 30.

(See the museum listings for photography exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art, the Museum of Natural History, and the New York Public Library.)

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MUSIC

Fruitful Visitor

ONE of the most extraordinary careers to arise out of (and transcend) the early-music movement is that of John Eliot Gardiner, the fifty-year-old Englishman who first came to prominence as director of the Monteverdi Choir. Gardiner, who will conduct two programs at Tanglewood this month, has always been esteemed as a musician of keen interests and ability, but what has become clear over the last decade is a level of industry that is extraordinary even in a field that belongs to the industrious. There seems to be a new major Gardiner recording in the shops every month, if not every week: Beethoven symphonies here, Handel operas and oratorios there, Monteverdi's 1610 Vespers performed live in St. Mark's, an ongoing series of the mature Mozart operas, forays into Brahms and Debussy, light opera—and this sampling is far from comprehensive, omitting what is probably Gardiner's strongest interest of all: the French heroic tradition.

The Paris operas of Gluck have been a special interest of Gardiner's, as have those symphonic works of Berlioz which Gluck influenced. (Gardiner has even done the Gluck-Berlioz hybrid edition of "Orphée et Eurydice," and no doubt we will one day have a major statement of Berlioz' Virgilian epic, "Les Troyens.") But, outside of recordings, New York has heard relatively little of Gardiner, so his stint at Tanglewood may tempt the curious, especially as Berlioz is its focus. Gardiner leads the Boston Symphony in excerpts from "Romeo and Juliet" on July 23 and in "Harold in Italy" on July 25, with a work by Beethoven filling out each program.

IN TOWN—OPERA

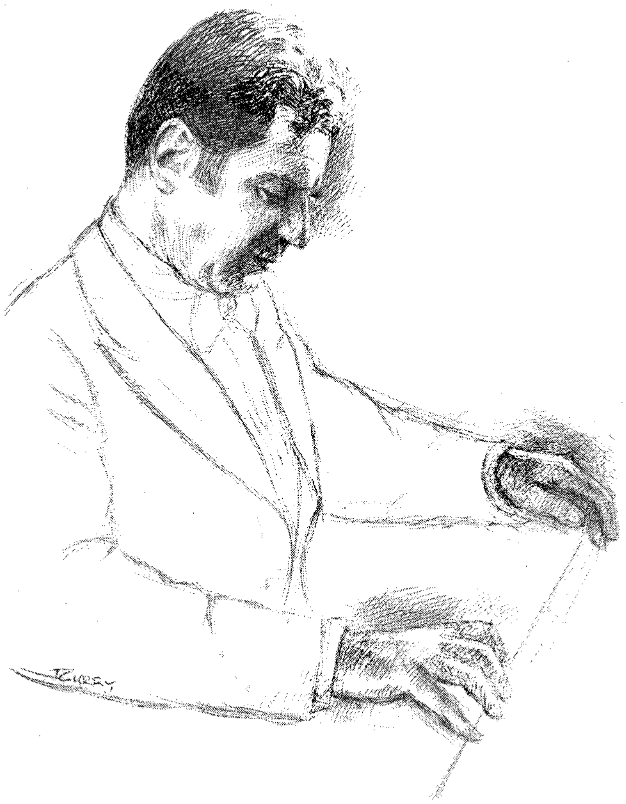
New York Grand Opera—Vincent La Selva conducts staged productions of Verdi operas. July 21 at 7:30: "La Traviata." . . ¶ July 27 at 7:30: "Aroldo." (Rumsey Playfield, Central Park, mid-Park at 72nd St. No tickets necessary.)

Magic Circle Repertory Company Ensemble—Presenting Holst's "Wandering Scholar," plus a workshop staging of the troupe's flamenco adaptation of "Carmen." (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. July 21 at 8. For information about tickets, call 724-2398).

IN TOWN—ORCHESTRAS

New York Philharmonic—Kurt Masur conducts Schumann's Symphony No. 1 (the "Spring") and Brahms' Piano Concerto No. 2 (featuring Garrick Ohlsson). (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. July 21-22 at 8. . . . **note:** Members of the orchestra will perform Schumann's Piano Quintet in pre-concert recitals, beginning both evenings at 6:45. Open to ticket holders.)

Mostly Mozart Festival—July 21: Hans Graf conducts the Festival Orchestra in Mozart's Symphony No. 32 and Violin Concerto No. 5 (with Itzhak Perlman), as well as in Brahms' Serenade No. 1. . . . ¶ July 22: The Emerson String Quartet plays Mozart's D-Major Quartet (K. 575), Beethoven's Quartet in B-Flat (Op. 18, No. 6), and Brahms' Clarinet Quintet (with Richard Stoltzman). . . . ¶ July 23-24: Gerard Schwarz conducts the Festival Orchestra in Mozart's Symphony No. 40, Piano Concerto in B-Flat Major (K. 595, with Vladimir Feltsman), and Violin Concerto No. 4 (featuring Chee-Yun), as well as Brahms' "Variations on a Theme by Haydn." . . ¶ July 26: The Cleveland String Quartet plays Mozart's G-Major Quartet (K. 387), Beethoven's C-Minor Quartet (Op. 18, No. 4), and (with the assistance of pianist Misha Dichter and double bassist Michael Morgan) Schubert's "Trout" Quintet. . . . **note:** In a pre-concert recital, open to ticket holders and beginning at 7, pianists Misha and Cipa Dichter will perform Mozart's Sonata in D Major for Two Pianos. . . . ¶ July 27-28: Pinchas Zukerman conducts the Festival Orchestra in Mahler's arrangement of Beethoven's F-Minor String Quartet (the "Serioso," Op. 95), as well as in Mozart's C-Major Piano Concerto (K. 467, with Jon Kimura Parker) and Beethoven's Violin Concerto (in which the conductor will double as soloist). (Avery Fisher Hall. 875-5030. Evenings at 8.)



Claude Frank at the Norfolk Chamber Music Festival.

Goldman Memorial Band—Gene Young conducts a pair of free concerts. July 24 at 8: A program that includes medleys from "West Side Story" and "No, No, Nanette," and such curiosities as Sousa's "Black Horse Troop March" and the "Vessillo Tricolore" march by Ponchielli. (Seaside Park, Brooklyn.) . . . ¶ July 25 at 7: Marches by Sousa, Johann Strauss, and Edwin Franko Goldman, as well as selections from "The Music Man" and other band classics. (Damrosch Park, Lincoln Center.)

Naumberg Orchestra—Jens Nygaard conducts Rossini's "Il Turco in Italia" Overture, Haydn's Symphony No. 100 (the "Military"), Leo Weiner's Serenade in F Minor, and Schumann's Cello Concerto (with Leslie Parnas). (Damrosch Park, Lincoln Center. July 24 at 8. No tickets necessary.)

New Amsterdam Symphony Orchestra—Miriam Burns conducts Stravinsky's Octet, Mozart's F-Major Piano Concerto (K. 413, featuring David Buechner), and Haydn's Symphony No. 44 (the "Trauer-symphonie"). (St. Peter's Episcopal Church, 346 W. 20th St. July 27 at 7:30. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

IN TOWN—RECITALS

Bargemusic—Pianist Sung-Mi Im performs three of Rachmaninoff's "Études-Tableaux"; David Kim joins her for Beethoven's Violin Sonata No. 3; and cellist Rafael Figueroa completes the ensemble for Brahms' C-Major Piano Trio. (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 1-718 624-4061. July 22 at 7:30 and July 25 at 4.)

Summergarden—The Museum of Modern Art's survey of twentieth-century Latin-American music continues as pianists Stephen Gosling and Jennifer Hayghe perform solo, four-hand, two-piano, and piano-and-computer works by William Ortíz-Alvarado (from Puerto Rico), Diego Luzuriaga (Ecuador), Ezequiel Viñao (Argentina), Gilberto Mendes (Brazil), Hector Tosar Errecart (Uruguay), Pablo Ortíz (Argentina), and Aaron Copland. No, of course Copland wasn't Latin-American—he was born in Brooklyn. But he did tour South America for a few months in 1941, promoting the Good Neighbor Policy, and the following year he produced a "Danzón Cubano" (included in this program) more distinguished for its suave lyricism than for the rhythmic panache one might expect. (Sculpture Garden, 14 W. 54th St. July 23-24 at 7:30. No tickets necessary.)

Spuyten Duyvil—A period-instrument group, performing works by Diego Ortiz, Marin Marais, and Handel. (Le Refuge Inn, 620 City Island Ave., City Island, the Bronx. July 25 at 11:30 a.m. No tickets necessary, but call 1-718 885-2478 to reserve a seat.)

Edward Brewer and Eric Milnes—Harpsichordists, playing three double concertos by Bach. (Rockwood Drive Circle, Van Cortlandt Park, the Bronx. July 25 at 2. . . . ¶ McGinley Center, Fordham University, Bronx Rose Hill Campus. July 25 at 4. No tickets necessary for either concert. For rain-date information, call 1-718 549-1899.)

Ilan Rechtman—The pianist will improvise on themes submitted by the audience. Prepare accordingly. (Hotel Wales, Madison Ave. at 92nd St. July 25 at 6. No tickets necessary.)

Gideon J. Th. Bodden—The City Carillonneur of Amsterdam, where they know from carillons. (Riverside Church, Riverside Dr. at 120th St. July 27 at 6:30. No tickets necessary.)

OUT OF TOWN

Caramoor Music Festival—July 22 at 4:15: Chamber works by Mozart, Beethoven, Hummel, and Hindemith, with pianist Donna-Lee Weng and the St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble. . . . ¶ July 23 at 8:30: The Emerson String Quartet plays quartets by Borodin (his Second), Shostakovich (his Seventh), and Tchaikovsky. . . . ¶ July 24 at 8:30: André Previn conducts the Orchestra of St. Luke's in an all-Mozart concert comprising the "Serenata Notturna," the Oboe Concerto (featuring Stephen Taylor), the Symphony No. 38 (the "Prague"), and the Concerto for Two Pianos (in which Mr. Previn will share the keyboard duties with Alicia de Larrocha). . . . ¶ July 25 at 5:30: Members of the St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble perform Tchaikovsky's String Sextet "Souvenir de Florence"; pianist André Previn joins them in Beethoven's Quintet for Piano and Winds and Poulenc's Trio for Oboe, Bassoon, and Piano. (Katonah, N.Y. 1-914 232-1252.)

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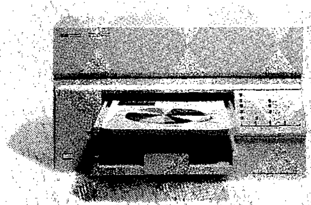

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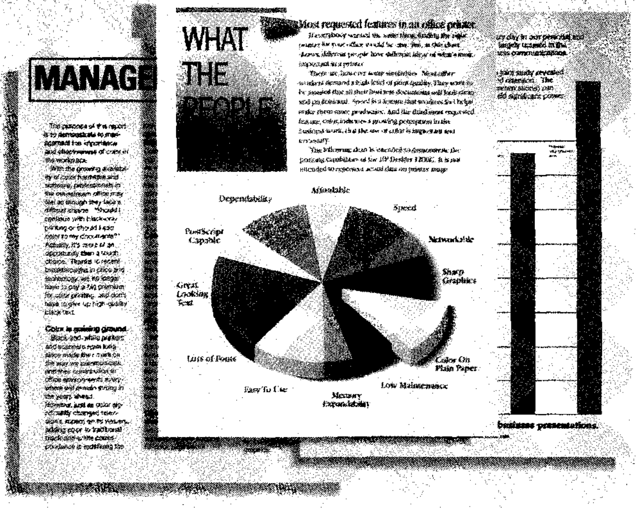
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Glimmerglass Opera—"The Midnight Angel," by David Carlson. (July 22 at 8 and July 26 at 2.) . . . ¶ "Così fan Tutte." (July 23 at 8.) . . . ¶ "Werther." (July 24 at 8.) . . . ¶ "Le Comte Ory." (July 25 at 2.) (Cooperstown, N.Y. For information about tickets, call 1-607 547-2255. English supertitles at all performances.)

Tanglewood—July 22 at 8:30: The Muir String Quartet performs quartets by Dvořák (his Twelfth, the "American"), Bartók (his Second), and Schubert (his "Death and the Maiden"). . . . ¶ July 23 at 6:30: Mellow trios by Mozart (his "Kegelstatt" Trio, for clarinet, viola, and piano) and Brahms (in A Minor, Op. 114, for viola, cello, and piano—better known in its original configuration for clarinet than in this version for viola). . . . ¶ July 23 at 8:30: John Eliot Gardiner conducts the Boston Symphony in Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 2 (featuring Richard Goode) and orchestral excerpts from Berlioz' dramatic symphony "Romeo and Juliet." . . . ¶ July 24 at 8:30: Seiji Ozawa conducts the Tanglewood Music Center Orchestra in Bernstein's Symphony No. 2 ("The Age of Anxiety," with the solo-piano part entrusted to Benjamin Pasternack) and Mahler's Symphony No. 4 (with mezzo-soprano Wendy White). . . . ¶ July 25 at 2:30: John Eliot Gardiner conducts the Boston Symphony in Beethoven's Symphony No. 4 and Berlioz' "Harold in Italy" (featuring violist Yuri Bashmet). (Lenox, Mass. For information about tickets, call 1-413 637-1940.)

Aston Magna Festival—A program of seventeenth-century instrumental works and concerted madrigals—that is, solo and ensemble vocal pieces with orchestrated accompaniments—by Monteverdi, Schütz, Biagio Marini, and Antonio Bertali. (Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson. July 23 at 8. For information about tickets, call 1-914 758-7425. . . . ¶ St. James Church, Great Barrington, Mass. July 24 at 6. For information about tickets, call 1-413 528-3595.)

Norfolk Chamber Music Festival—July 23 at 8:30: Chamber music by Telemann, Bartók (his "Contrasts"), and Fauré (his G-Minor Piano Quartet). . . . ¶ July 24 at 8:30: The first great masterpiece among Mozart's piano concertos, the "Jeunehomme" Concerto (in E-Flat, K. 271) derived its nickname from Mlle. Jeunehomme, the French virtuoso for whom it was written and who premièred it while on tour in Salzburg in January, 1777. This performance will feature pianist Claude Frank, a onetime Artur Schnabel protégé, especially noted for his interpretations of the classic Germanic repertoire (and, as musicologist Nicolas Slonimsky puts it, for "a grand envergure"); Frank was, in fact, the first American to record all thirty-two of Beethoven's piano sonatas. Aldo Parisot leads the Norfolk Chamber Orchestra, in a program that also includes a scaled-up version of Mendelssohn's Octet and Bach's D-Minor Two-Violin Concerto (here recast for a pair of cellos). . . . ¶ July 25 at 3: Jonathan Babbitt directs the Litchfield County Choral Union in Messiaen's "O Sacrum Convivium" and Brahms' "A German Requiem" (with an orchestra). (Route 44, Norfolk, Conn. For information about tickets, call 1-203 542-3000.)

Maverick Concerts—The Emerson String Quartet performs early, middle, and late Beethoven: his Quartets No. 6 (Op. 18, No. 6), No. 10 (Op. 74, the "Harp"), and No. 16 (Op. 135). (Woodstock, N.Y. July 25 at 3. For information about tickets, call 1-914 679-8217.)

JAZZ/POP/ROCK
PERSONAL APPEARANCES

Bad Brains—In the early eighties, this D.C.-based outfit of devout Rastafarians was virtually the only black band on the punk circuit—and probably the tightest speed-punk band in America. Their influence on Living Colour and the Black Rock Coalition is well documented. They've bounced back from personnel changes with a terrific new vocalist (Israel Joseph-I), and they still pound out quicksilver jams with a fury checked only by their occasional reggae numbers. (Roseland, 239 W. 52nd St. 307-7171. July 21 at 8.)

Neville Brothers—A SummerStage appearance by the Brothers is becoming an annual event, and nothing could be finer. This New Orleans family affair is a democratic, organically tuned unit, but singer Aaron's range and unearthly purity of tone give their sound that final push over the rainbow. (Central Park SummerStage, Rumsey Playfield, mid-Park at 72nd St. July 24 at 3. For tickets, call 307-7171.)

Duran Duran/Terence Trent D'Arby—A comeback concert featuring two formerly washed-up acts. Don't laugh—the new album by these Euro-pouters, "Duran Duran," is a remarkably hip collection of low-fibre, chock-full-of-sugar pop songs. D'Arby's reëntry compilation, "Symphony or Damn," is a stunning piece of work that finally delivers on the promise of his 1987 début album. A decidedly non-grunge night at the shore. (Jones Beach Theatre. 1-516 221-1000. July 24 at 8.)

Africa Fête—An Atlantic crossing that offers a wide-ranging assortment of Afro-pop styles. Acoustic folk-rocker Ismael Lo and big-hearted bandleader and vocalist Baaba Maal cover the Senegalese sound. Angelique Kidjo, from Benin, writes and sings swirling, jazz-flavored compositions about Francophone Africa. (Branford Marsalis plays on her latest album, "Logozo.") Also on the bill is Ramiro Naka, a singer from Guinea-Bissau. Representing the Americas is Haiti's Boukman Eksperyans, a bubbling nine-member band. (Central Park SummerStage. July 25 at 3. No tickets necessary.)

Barry Manilow—*Often dismissed as a* two-word joke, Barry Manilow is that and more: a walking, talking, belting, tear-wringing compendium of fabulousness. And now he is an honorary Friend of Bill, having opened the Presidential Inaugural Gala with his colossal patriotic paean "Let Freedom Ring." This glittering son of Williamsburg, Brooklyn, writes the songs; the rest is up to you. (Jones Beach Theatre. July 25 at 8.)

Whitney Houston—With Angie & Debbie and Kirk Whalum. (Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 247-4777. July 21, July 23-24, and July 26, all at 8.)

Phish—Jones Beach Theatre. July 23 at 8.

Panama Francis & the Savoy Sultans—Washington Square Park. July 27 at 8. No tickets necessary.

Travis Tritt/Trisha Yearwood—Jones Beach Theatre. July 27 at 8.

"Jazz in July"—The 92nd Street Y's annual summer series continues. July 21: Pianists Bill Charlap, Stephen Mayer, Barbara Carroll, Roland Hanna, and Dick Hyman. . . . ¶ July 22: "New York Jazz 1927," with Vince Giordano and the All-Stars, among others. . . . ¶ July 27: "The Swinging Songs of Cy Coleman," with the Cy Coleman trio, Terry Richards, Mr. Hyman, et al. (Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100. Evenings at 8. The series runs through July 29.)

SPORTS

HOME TEAMS

Yankees—Vs. the Seattle Mariners, July 21 at 1. . . . ¶ Vs. the California Angels, July 22-23 at 7:30, July 24 (Old Timers' Day) at 2, and July 25 at 1:30.

Mets—Vs. the Florida Marlins, July 27 at 7:40.

(The Yankees play at Yankee Stadium, 1-718 293-6000, and the Mets play at Shea Stadium, 1-718 507-8499.)

ABOVE AND BEYOND

Cave & Straw—Rock-and-roller Nick Cave will read from his novel, "And the Ass Saw the Angel." A musical performance by downtown chanteuse Syd Straw will follow. (Central Park SummerStage, Rumsey Playfield, mid-Park at 72nd St. July 22 at 8:30. No tickets necessary.)

Smooth Sailing—So you're down at Battery Park City and you see sailors tacking toward the Statue of Liberty, dashing to the port and lee sides, and you think, Hey, I'd like to be out there. Here's your chance. The Harbor Festival Foundation is offering free half-hour introductions to sailing, at the North Cove Yacht Harbor. July 19-23, from 11 to 5. For reservations, call 435-5000.

China in Brooklyn—On July 25 at 1, there will be a tour featuring plants from China in the Brooklyn Botanic Garden. At 2:30, the Chinese Music Ensemble of New York will perform, among other tuneful offerings, Cantonese music on traditional instruments, including the pipa and the erhu. (1000 Washington Ave., near Grand Army Plaza. 1-718 941-4044, ext. 215.)

Swing High—At the World Financial Center, Arrow, who plays a combination of soul and calypso known as soca, will open the free Dancing on the Plaza series on July 21, from 7:30 to 9:30. . . . ¶ Meanwhile, at Lincoln Center's Fountain Plaza, the Midsummer Night Swing series winds down this week, with the Illinois Jacquet big band playing the final concert. (July 21-24, from 8:15 to 11. Dance instruction begins at 6:30 on Wednesdays and Thursdays. For information about tickets, call 875-5400.)

Festa & Ceili—The Church of Our Lady of Pompei's annual Festa Italiana will include carnival rides and Italian food. (Carmine St. July 22-Aug. 1. Mondays through Fridays, from 6 to 11:30, and Saturdays and Sundays, from 2 to 11:30.) . . . ¶ The twelfth annual Rockaway Irish Festival will take visitors back to Irish Town, as the area was known in the early fifties. There will be traditional music and crafts, as well as step dancing. (Rockaway Beach Blvd. at Beach 108th and Beach 109th Sts. July 24-25, from noon to 8. Admission by contribution.)

Vicarious Chill—Looking for an alternative to air conditioning? The Central Park Zoo has planned a Chill Out weekend July 24-25. Visitors can watch Ed Triano creating wildlife ice sculptures each day from 2 to 4, or observe the polar bears and penguins at chow time. Gus, Ida, and Lily, the zoo's white wonders, will be fed "polar pizzas," made of ice and apples, with extra fish, at noon and 3. The penguins will dine on their usual fare—frozen herring and capelin—at 10:30 and 2:30. (Fifth Ave. at 64th St. No charge beyond zoo admission.)

Readings—July 21-22 and July 26-27 at 8: The Seraphim Theatre Company is offering a play-reading series, which will include an evening of work by Richard Nelson, who wrote "Two Shakespearean Actors." (Colony Theatre, 152 W. 71st St. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ July 22 at 8: In a tip of the hat to gay pride, Christopher Bram, Harold McNeil Robinson, and Mariana Romo-Carmona will read from their own work. (Dixon Place, 258 Bowery, near Houston St. Tickets at the door on the evening of the reading.) . . . ¶ July 23 at 10: A Nuyorican Poets Café slam, where hecklers are rated instead of readers. (236 E. 3rd St. Tickets at the door on the night of the reading.) . . . ¶ July 27 at 7: Brooks Hansen, who wrote the novel "Boone," and funnyman Mark O'Donnell will read from their own work. (Limbo, 47 Avenue A, at 4th St. No tickets necessary.)

Walks & Tours—July 24 at 1: Riotous, rebellious New York, courtesy of Big Onion Walking Tours. For more information, call 439-1090. . . . ¶ July 25 at noon: The South Street Seaport Museum will take visitors below deck on the Ambrose Lightship. For more information, call 669-9481.

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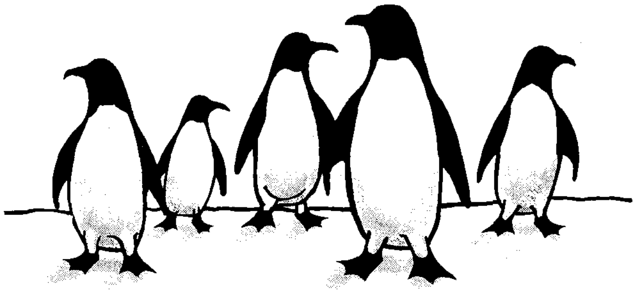

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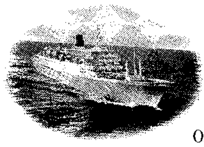

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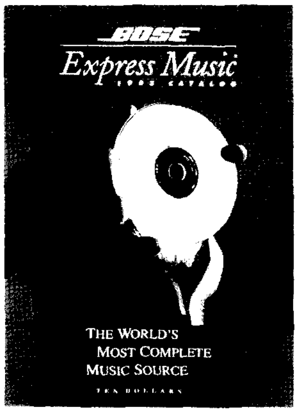

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE MOVIE HOUSES

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			21	22	23	24
25	26	27				

FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN "MOVIES IN BRIEF," STARTING ON PAGE 26.

EAST SIDE

Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St. (995-2000)
Theatre 1: Through July 22: "Beware of a Holy Whore" (1970, directed by Rainer Werner Fassbinder; in German). From July 23: "Amongst Friends" (Rob Weiss).
Theatre 2: "Much Ado About Nothing" (†).
Theatre 3: "Orlando" (†).
Theatre 4: "Strictly Ballroom" (Baz Luhrmann).
Theatre 5: "Like Water for Chocolate" (Alfonso Arau, in Spanish).
Theatre 6: "Orlando" (†).

Little Theatre, Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171)
Through July 22: "Heimat II: Chronicle of a Generation: Episodes 10 and 11" (Edgar Reitz).
From July 23: "Heimat II: Chronicle of a Generation: Episodes 12 and 13."

Newman Theatre, Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171)
A program of Italian films.

Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)
Theatre 1: "Sleepless in Seattle" (†).
Theatre 2: "Dennis the Menace" (Nick Castle).
Theatre 3: "Rookie of the Year" (Daniel Stern).

Village Theatre VII, 3rd Ave. at 11th. (982-0400)
Theatre 1: "In the Line of Fire" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Firm" (†).
Theatre 3: "What's Love Got to Do with It" (†).
Theatre 4: "Menace II Society" (Allen and Albert Hughes).
Theatre 5: "In the Line of Fire" (†).
Theatre 6: "Free Willy" (Simon Wincer).
Theatre 7: "The Firm" (†).

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)
Through July 22: "Hard-Boiled" (John Woo).
From July 23: Two programs of animated Japanese film; and "Delivered Vacant" (Nora Jacobson), a documentary.

Village East Cinemas, 2nd Ave. at 12th. (529-6799)
Theatre 1: "Un Coeur en Hiver" (†).
Theatre 2: "Benefit of the Doubt" (†).
Theatre 3: Through July 22: (Matinées only) "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" (†); and (evenings only) "The Lover" (Jean-Jacques Annaud). From July 23: "Another Stakeout" (John Badham).
Theatre 4: "Chain of Desire" (†).
Theatre 5: "Hocus Pocus" (Kenny Ortega).
Theatre 6: "American Heart" (†).
Theatre 7: "Boys' Shorts: The New Queer Cinema," a program of six short films.

19th Street East 6, B'way at 19th. (260-8000)
Theatre 1: "The Firm" (†).
Theatre 2: "Sleepless in Seattle" (†).
Theatre 3: Through July 22: "Weekend at Bernie's 2" (Robert Klane). From July 23: "Poetic Justice" (John Singleton).
Theatre 4: "The Firm" (†).
Theatre 5: Through July 22: "Sleepless in Seattle" (†). From July 23: "Coneheads" (Steve Barron), with Dan Aykroyd and Jane Curtin.
Theatre 6: Through July 22: "Dennis the Menace" (Nick Castle). From July 23: "Another Stakeout" (John Badham).

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
"In the Line of Fire" (†).

Murray Hill Cinemas, 160 E. 34th. (689-6548)
Theatre 1: "Hocus Pocus" (Kenny Ortega).
Theatre 2: "What's Love Got to Do with It" (†).
Theatre 3: Through July 22: "Weekend at Bernie's 2" (Robert Klane). From July 23: "Another Stakeout" (John Badham).
Theatre 4: Through July 22: (Matinées only) "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" (†); and (evenings only) "Menace II Society" (Allen and Albert Hughes). From July 23: "Poetic Justice" (John Singleton).

34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: Through July 22: "Last Action Hero" (†). From July 23: "Coneheads" (Steve Barron).
Theatre 2: "The Firm" (†).
Theatre 3: "Sleepless in Seattle" (†).

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"Jurassic Park" (†).

Eastside Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
"Like Water for Chocolate" (Alfonso Arau, in Spanish).

Sutton I and 2, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
Theatre 1: "Hocus Pocus" (Kenny Ortega).
Theatre 2: "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" (†).

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
"Rookie of the Year" (Daniel Stern).

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
"House of Cards" (†).

Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: "Dave" (Ivan Reitman).
Theatre 2: Through July 22: "Dennis the Menace" (Nick Castle). From July 23: "Poetic Justice" (John Singleton).

59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th. (759-4630)
"Benefit of the Doubt" (†).

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: "Last Action Hero" (†).
Theatre 2: "Last Action Hero" (†).

Cinema I, Cinema II, and Cinema 3rd Avenue, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022)
Theatre 1: Through July 22: "What's Love Got to Do with It" (†). From July 23: "Another Stakeout" (John Badham).
Theatre 2: "Strictly Ballroom" (Baz Luhrmann).
Theatre 3: "Guilty as Sin" (Sidney Lumet).

Art East Cinema, 1st Ave. at 61st. (644-1111)
Through July 22: "The Story of Qiu Ju" (Zhang Yimou; in Mandarin).
From July 23: To be announced.

First & 62nd Cinemas, 400 E. 62nd. (752-4600)
Theatre 1: "Jurassic Park" (†).
Theatre 2: "Much Ado About Nothing" (†).
Theatre 3: "Jurassic Park" (†).
Theatre 4: Through July 22: "Jurassic Park" (†). From July 23: "Coneheads" (Steve Barron).
Theatre 5: "Much Ado About Nothing" (†).
Theatre 6: "Jurassic Park" (†).

Gemini I and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: "Cliffhanger" (Renny Harlin).
Theatre 2: "Weekend at Bernie's 2" (Robert Klane).

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
"Sleepless in Seattle" (†).

New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: "In the Line of Fire" (†).
Theatre 2: "Free Willy" (Simon Wincer).

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"Menace II Society" (Allen and Albert Hughes).

Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"The Firm" (†).

East 85th Street, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"The Firm" (†).

Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th. (534-1880)
Theatre 1: "Jurassic Park" (†).
Theatre 2: "In the Line of Fire" (†).

Orpheum VII, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (876-2400)
Theatre 1: Through July 22: "Last Action Hero" (†). From July 23: "Poetic Justice" (John Singleton).
Theatre 2: "Sleepless in Seattle" (†).
Theatre 3: "Sleepless in Seattle" (†).
Theatre 4: "Free Willy" (Simon Wincer).
Theatre 5: Through July 22: "Weekend at Bernie's 2" (Robert Klane). From July 23: "Coneheads" (Steve Barron), with Dan Aykroyd and Jane Curtin.
Theatre 6: "Rookie of the Year" (Daniel Stern).
Theatre 7: "Dennis the Menace" (Nick Castle).

86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Theatre 1: "Hocus Pocus" (Kenny Ortega).
Theatre 2: Through July 22: "What's Love Got to Do with It" (†). From July 23: "Another Stakeout" (John Badham).

WEST SIDE

Film Forum, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)
Theatre 1: "From Hollywood to Hanoi" (directed by Tiana Thi Thanh Nga).
Theatre 2: See listings under Revival Houses.
Theatre 3: "Romper Stomper" (Geoffrey Wright).

Waverly I and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: Through July 22: "Last Action Hero" (†). From July 23: "Coneheads" (Steve Barron).
Theatre 2: Through July 22: "Weekend at Bernie's 2" (Robert Klane). From July 23: "Poetic Justice" (John Singleton).

Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: "Jurassic Park" (†).
Theatre 2: "Jurassic Park" (†).

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "Visions of Light: The Art Cinematography," a documentary.
Theatre 2: "Dave" (Ivan Reitman).
Theatre 3: "For a Lost Soldier" (Roeland Kerbosch).
Theatre 4: "Brother's Keeper" (Joe Berlinger and Bruce Sinofsky), a documentary.

Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd. (691-4744)
Theatre 1: "What's Love Got to Do with It" (†).
Theatre 2: "Jurassic Park" (†).
Theatre 3: "Rookie of the Year" (Daniel Stern).
Theatre 4: "Jurassic Park" (†).
Theatre 5: "In the Line of Fire" (†).
Theatre 6: "Hocus Pocus" (Kenny Ortega).
Theatre 7: "Free Willy" (Simon Wincer).
Theatre 8: "What's Love Got to Do with It" (†).
Theatre 9: "In the Line of Fire" (†).

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: "Made in America" (†).
Theatre 2: "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" (†).
Theatre 3: "Cliffhanger" (Renny Harlin).

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
"In the Line of Fire" (†).

Worldwide Cinemas, 50th St. between 8th and 9th Aves. (246-1583)
Theatre 1: "Benefit of the Doubt" (†).
Theatre 2: "Indecent Proposal" (Adrian Lyne).
Theatre 3: "Sliver" (Phillip Noyce).
Theatre 4: "Dave" (Ivan Reitman).
Theatre 5: "Indochine" (Régis Wargnier, in French).
Theatre 6: "Map of the Human Heart" (Vincent Ward).

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"Jurassic Park" (†).

Festival, 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)
"Dave" (Ivan Reitman), with Kevin Kline.

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
"Chain of Desire" (†).

Carnegie Hall Cinemas, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)
Theatre 1: "Road Scholar" (Roger Weisberg).
Theatre 2: "Like Water for Chocolate" (Alfonso Arau, in Spanish).

Angelika 57, 225 W. 57th. (586-1900)
Through July 22: "The Story of Qiu Ju" (Zhang Yimou; in Mandarin).
From July 23: "Amongst Friends" (Rob Weiss).

Paris, 4 W. 58th. (980-5656)
"The Music of Chance" (†).

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
"Strictly Ballroom" (Baz Luhrmann).

Columbus Circle, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"Hocus Pocus" (Kenny Ortega).

62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd. (265-7466)
"In the Line of Fire" (†).

Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "Much Ado About Nothing" (†).
Theatre 2: "Orlando" (†).
Theatre 3: "Orlando" (†).
Theatre 4: "Jacquot" (†).
Theatre 5: "Much Ado About Nothing" (†).
Theatre 6: "Un Coeur en Hiver" (†).

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)
"Jurassic Park" (†).

84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: Through July 22: "Last Action Hero" (†). From July 23: "Poetic Justice" (John Singleton).
Theatre 2: Through July 22: "Weekend at Bernie's 2" (Robert Klane). From July 23: "Another Stakeout" (John Badham).
Theatre 3: "Sleepless in Seattle" (†).
Theatre 4: Through July 22: "What's Love Got to Do with It" (†). From July 23: "Coneheads" (Steve Barron).
Theatre 5: "The Firm" (†).
Theatre 6: "Free Willy" (Simon Wincer).

Metro Cinema I and 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)

Theatre 1: "Rookie of the Year" (Daniel Stern).

Theatre 2: "Jurassic Park" (†).

Olympia I and II, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)

Theatre 1: "Dennis the Menace" (Nick Castle).

Theatre 2: "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" (†).

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)

Theatre 1: "Made in America" (†).

Theatre 2: "Free Willy" (directed by Simon Wincer).

Theatre 3: "Cliffhanger" (Renny Harlin).

Theatre 4: "Sleepless in Seattle" (†).

Theatre 5: "Posse" (Mario Van Peebles).

Theatre 6: "Dennis the Menace" (Nick Castle).

Theatre 7: "Weekend at Bernie's 2" (Robert Klane).

Embassy I, B'way at 46th. (302-0494)

Through July 22: "What's Love Got to Do with It" (†).

From July 23: "Another Stakeout" (John Badham).

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)

Theatre 1: Through July 22: "In the Line of Fire" (†). From July 23: "Coneheads" (Steve Barron).

Theatre 2: Through July 22: "Menace II Society" (Allen and Albert Hughes). From July 23: "In the Line of Fire" (†).

Theatre 3: Through July 22: "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" (†). From July 23: "What's Love Got to Do with It" (†).

Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)

"The Firm" (†).

National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)

Theatre 1: Through July 22: "Last Action Hero" (†). From July 23: "Poetic Justice" (John Singleton).

Theatre 2: "Rookie of the Year" (Daniel Stern).

REVIVAL HOUSES

Film Forum 2, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)

Through July 22: "Glen or Glenda" (see page 26); and "Jail Bait" (1954, directed by Edward D. Wood, Jr.).

From July 23: A program of films by Mario Bava.

Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)

Through July 24: "Doctor Zhivago" (1965, David Lean), with Omar Sharif.

From July 25: "Oklahoma!" (1955, Fred Zinnemann), with Gordon MacRae and Shirley Jones.

Thalia, B'way at 95th. (316-4962)

Through July 22: "Osaka Elegy" (1936, Kenji Mizoguchi; in Japanese) and "Sisters of the Gion" (1936, Mizoguchi; in Japanese).

July 23-26: "Miller's Crossing" (1990, Joel Coen) and "Barton Fink' (1991, Coen).

From July 27: To be announced.

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)

July 21: "How to Steal a Million" (1966, William Wyler); and "Two for the Road" (1967, Stanley Donen), both with Audrey Hepburn.

July 22: "Brazil" (1985, Terry Gilliam); and "RoboCop" (1987, Paul Verhoeven).

July 23-24: "Taxi Driver" (1976, Martin Scorsese) and "Raging Bull" (1980, Scorsese), both with Robert De Niro.

July 25: "Funny Face" (1957, Stanley Donen); and "Sabrina" (1954, Billy Wilder).

July 26: "The Woman Next Door" (1981, François Truffaut; in French) and "The Story of Adèle H." (1975, Truffaut; in French), with Isabelle Adjani.

July 27: "How to Marry a Millionaire" (1953, Jean Negulesco); and "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes" (1953, Howard Hawks).

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—A program of films from Mexico and other Latin-American countries.

Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center, 165 W. 65th St., plaza level. (875-5600)—A program of crime, mystery, and suspense films by French directors.

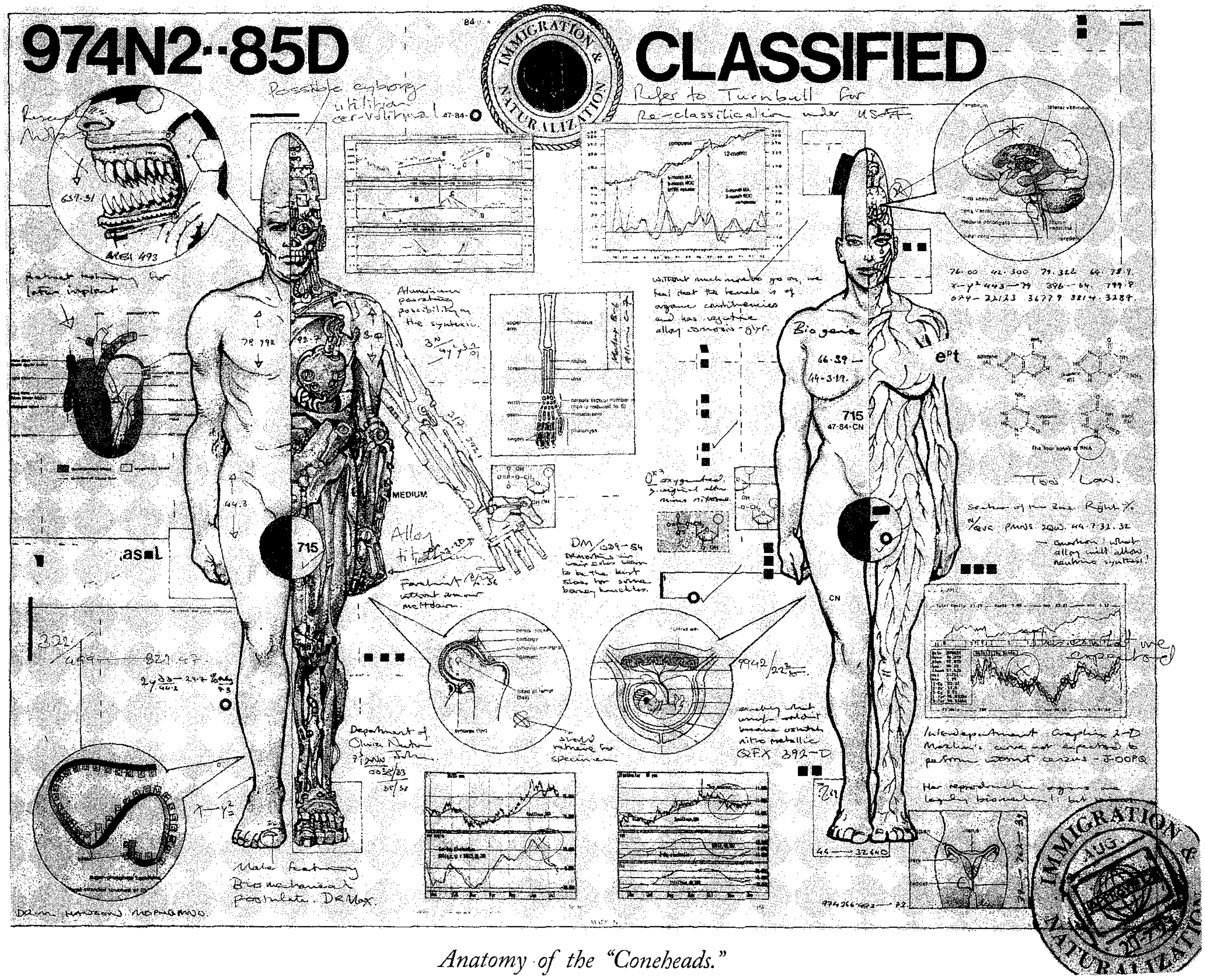
American Museum of the Moving Image, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria. (1-718 784-0077)—"All in the Family: The Classic Melodramas of John Stahl and Douglas Sirk." July 24 at 2: "All That Heaven Allows" (1955, Sirk). . . . ¶ July 24 at 4: "Back Street" (1932, Stahl). . . . ¶ July 25 at 2: "Summer Storm" (1944, Sirk). . . . ¶ July 25 at 4: "There's Always Tomorrow" (1956, Sirk).

Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—July 21 at 12:30 and 6: "Thérèse" (1986, Alain Cavalier; in French). . . . ¶ July 21 at 3:15 and 8:45: "Une Femme Douce" (1969, Robert Bresson; in French).

Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. (570-3949)—July 23-24 at 3: "In Search of the Castaways" (1962, Robert Stevenson). . . . ¶ July 23 at 7: ". . . And Justice for All" (1979, Norman Jewison). . . . ¶ July 24 at 7: "Suddenly, Last Summer" (1959, Joseph L. Mankiewicz).

Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. (662-2133)—July 21 at 8: "He Who Gets Slapped" (1924, Victor Seastrom; silent), with Lon Chaney. (Organ accompaniment written and played by Lee Erwin.)

Bryant Park, Sixth Ave., at 41st St. (982-4142)—Mondays, starting at dusk, free, drive-in-style moviegoing, beginning with Looney Tunes cartoons, coming attractions, and an onscreen clock that counts down the minutes until the feature begins. July 26: "A Night at the Opera" (1935, Sam Wood), with the Marx Brothers.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MOVIES IN BRIEF

SEE PRECEDING PAGES FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS. IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN "THE CURRENT CINEMA" DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

Guys and Dolls

EDWARD D. WOOD, JR.,'S "Glen or Glenda" (playing July 21-22, at Film Forum 2) is inadvertent bargain-basement camp that carries a lunatic charge. Wood addresses this straight-faced treatment of transvestism to a 1953 audience shocked and titillated by Christine Jorgensen's sex-change operation. The opening titles promise a movie of "stark realism" and include the injunction "Judge ye not . . ." The first sign of stark realism is Bela Lugosi surrounded by skulls and a skeleton, declaiming doggerel about "man's constant groping of things unknown." Wood fades from Lugosi to detective Lyle Talbot inspecting a cross-dressed corpse. Talbot, who has seen one transvestite victim too many, seeks wisdom from a psychiatrist. "Most of us have our idiosyncrasies," the shrink says. Talbot replies, "This fellow's was quite pronounced." The shrink contends that it's natural for men caught in the modern grind to yearn for satin dainties. Then he gives the case history of Glen or Glenda (played by Wood himself), who started out wearing his sister's dress and ended up appropriating her whole wardrobe. Lugosi pops up repeatedly and warns, "Beware of the big green dragon that sits on your doorstep. He eats little boys, puppy dogs' tails, and big fat snails!" He seems to be in Transylvania, but an entire Sorbonne of semiologists couldn't figure out exactly where this movie's images come from.

(The following notes are by Anthony Lane, Terrence Rafferty, and Michael Sragow.)

American Heart—Jack Kelson (Jeff Bridges), the hero of Martin Bell's film, is a fortyish ex-con who lives in a miserable furnished room in Seattle with his fourteen-year-old son, Nick (Edward Furlong). This is the sort of character that tends to bring out the worst in actors: a loser with big dreams. But Bridges wins the audience's belief. He doesn't try to *act* the movie's trite ideas about fatherhood and self-fulfillment and the American Dream: his physical eloquence makes everything Kelson does look like the result of a lifetime of constant trouble and lousy choices, and his dry, unassuming, lived-in acting style has a mysterious cumulative power. But when Bridges isn't onscreen the script (by Peter Silverman) is left to its own devices, and the movie seems to flounder. The picture turns out to be about nothing more interesting than luck, and that's too bad, because Bridges' beautiful, radiantly precise acting has stirred in us the hope that it might actually be about grace.—T.R. (Reviewed in our issue of 6/14/93.) (Village East Cinemas.)

Benefit of the Doubt—The illegitimate offspring of "The Stepfather," this dysfunctional-family thriller follows an obsessively devoted dad (Donald Sutherland) as he tries to connect with his grandson (Rider Strong) and reconnect with his daughter (Amy Irving) after spending twenty-two years in prison for killing her mother. There's a topical recovered-memory gimmick; otherwise, the plot swings on rusty hinges. Apart from Irving's game attempt to harden her screen image (she looks like a pumped-up Priscilla Presley and sounds like Susan Tyrell), all the movie has to recommend it are the Arizona red-rock locations, which are filled with whorl-like patterns and convoluted ridges, as if some Navajo deity left fingerprints on the landscape. Jonathan Heap directed, from a script by Jeffrey Polman and Christopher Keyser; with Graham Greene, Christopher McDonald, and Theodore Bikel.—M.S. (Village East Cinemas, 59th Street East Cinema, and Worldwide Cinemas.)

Chain of Desire—Not quite as kinky as it sounds, but you can't have everything. Temistocles Lopez's movie is a New York update of the Max Ophuls classic "La Ronde," itself adapted from an Arthur Schnitzler play. The carrousel structure remains, tinged with the risks of a more treacherous age: A meets B, B meets C, and so on. Some are married, some are gay, some never exchange a word; Lopez rings the changes with levity and charm, and if each encounter leaves you wanting to know more, that only sharpens the melancholy of the film, the knowledge that satisfaction hangs just out of reach. The very act of repetition brings with it a clutch of sad gags—"Why can't I just get laid like everyone else?" asks a disgruntled Grace Zabriskie, as the wife of Malcolm McDowell. The performances are a mixed bunch, as you might expect, and the dialogue occasionally drops into laziness; one had hoped to have heard the last of "It's tough out there on the streets." Lopez's movie doesn't even like the streets; it's happier inside—in a bedroom, a studio, or a church. There are moments of exquisite, sombre half-lighting, just right for the uncertain needs of its characters; and one linkup, of voyeurs at their windows, is both the loneliest and funniest sex scene of the year. A slight and rather ramshackle movie, it's never as arousing as it hopes to be, but then Lopez is that uncommon creature, a director who is most at home with the fleeting and the failed.—A.L. (Village East Cinemas, and 57th St. Playhouse.)

Un Coeur en Hiver—Claude Sautet's film, as its title suggests, is not much of a heartwarmer, but its cool look at thwarted passion is enthralling nonetheless. Stéphane (Daniel Auteuil) makes and mends violins; Camille (Emmanuelle Béart) plays them. The two of them shift from distrust to desire to disappointment—in other words, they go through all the motions of love except the making of it. This is so restrained it's shocking; we feel the terrible pressure of all that Stéphane might do with his life and yet refuses to attempt. With his spirit as buttoned down as his shirts, Auteuil offers a startling portrayal of failure, never hamming it up for the sake of our compassion. André Dussollier turns in an equally quiet performance as Stéphane's business partner and rival in love; add Béart's immaculate poise, and you wonder what strange district of Paris this is. In French.—A.L. (6/7/93) (Village East Cinemas, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

The Firm—A vacuous upper-middle-class success story about a fresh-faced lad outwitting both sides of the law while securing wealth and safety for his family. That Cub Scout of superstars Tom Cruise is perfectly cast as the go-getting, white-bread hero of John Grisham's tale of chicanery and murder in a hoity-toity Memphis law firm. The director, Sydney Pollack, and his usual phalanx of screenwriters (the credited ones are Robert Towne, David Rayfiel, and David Rabe) try to improve on their source—and only partially succeed. The clunky plot continues to be riddled with implausibilities, and the movie runs a slack two hours and thirty-four minutes. But Pollack and his team do come up with a more logical line of action and give the hero and his wife (Jeanne Tripplehorn) a smidgen of self-awareness. (The sexy, skeptical Tripplehorn handles the challenge far better than Cruise does.) And they soup up the side characters. Holly Hunter, Gary Busey, Ed Harris, David Strathairn, and Wilford Brimley do themselves proud, and Gene Hackman is in a class by himself, brewing unprecedented mixtures of moral dry rot, fellow feeling, and animal vitality. The supporting cast provides centripetal force; too bad the center cannot hold.—M.S. (Village Theatre VII, 19th Street East 6, 34th Street Showplace, Tower East, East 85th Street, 84th Street Sixplex, and Astor Plaza.)

House of Cards—As a psychiatrist who treats mentally disturbed children, Tommy Lee Jones pulls off a keenly modulated change of pace. He speaks a second language with his arms, hands, and fingers, using sharp, quick gestures for emphasis and clarity. Even Jones's impassioned shrink can't break through to Sally (Asha Menina), a six-year-old who stops speaking, shrieks as if autistic, and executes extraordinary feats of coördination and artistry. Sally's mother (an earnest Kathleen Turner) tries to reach her daughter by analyzing the girl's creation of a spiralling house of cards. The writer-director, Michael Lessac, sets up a debate between the visionary Turner and the pragmatic Jones, only to resolve it with a kind of poetic shorthand. From the start, Lessac aestheticizes the material instead of dramatizing it, laying out the ingredients of Sally's private world in a dreamy credit sequence. As a result, the audience is way ahead of the characters. But Lessac does have a talent for evoking shadowlands.—M.S. (Plaza.)

In the Line of Fire—Clint Eastwood plays Frank Horrigan, a tired-looking middle-aged Secret Service agent who gets wind of a plot to kill the President and marshals his flagging powers in an attempt to stop the assassin (John Malkovich). It's a basic race against the clock: the good guy knows what the bad guy means to do; the villain's preparations and the hero's investigation run on separate tracks until they converge, like runaway trains, at the scene of the intended crime. The movie has a clear, simple thriller logic that's far more satisfying than the static variations-on-a-massacre construction of Eastwood's "Dirty Harry" pictures and spaghetti Westerns. And the heroics here are stirring, because the star's ravaged face and stiff, weary gestures tell us that everything Horrigan does costs him something, physically and emotionally. The director, Wolfgang Petersen, isn't a particularly imaginative or stylish filmmaker, but he delivers the goods, and in record time. Both Eastwood's performance and the movie itself have the quality of meat-and-potatoes genre-picture entertainment: nothing fancy, nothing unusual. The only hints of more exotic and unpredictable sensations come from Malkovich, who is threatening to become the most gloriously peculiar screen presence since the heyday of Alastair Sim.—T.R. (7/12/93) (Village Theatre VII, Bay Cinema, New York Twin, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, Chelsea Cinemas, Guild, 62nd & Broadway, and Embassy.)

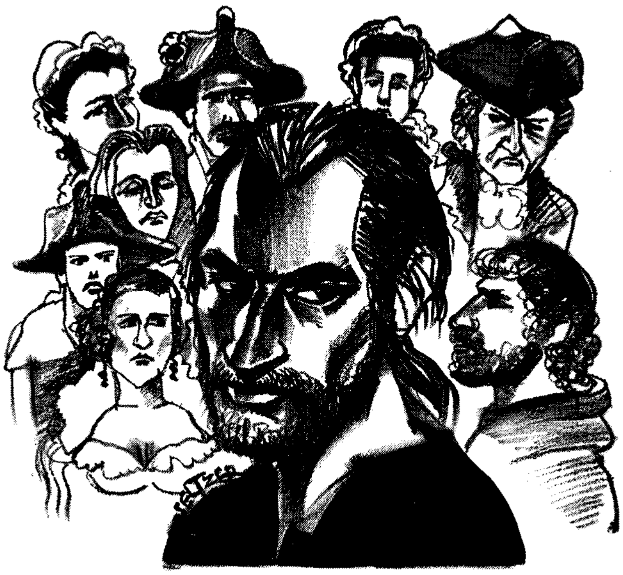
Jacquot—Agnès Varda's film is a graceful, affecting tribute to her husband, the filmmaker Jacques Demy, who died (of leukemia, at age fifty-nine) in 1990. Documentary footage shows Demy in the last year of his life, reminiscing about his childhood and adolescence in the coastal town of Nantes. His liver-spotted hands caress the cheap cameras with which he shot his first movies—most of them crude but imaginative animated shorts with paper-cutout characters. Varda fleshes out her husband's memories with dramatized episodes from his early life, and uses clips from his mature films—"Lola" (1961) and "The Umbrellas of Cherbourg" (1964) are the best known—to demonstrate the relationship between the mundane experiences of his youth and the ravishing romantic art he created as an adult. The film's elegiac, reflective rhythm is seductive and very moving. Varda conveys the joy of young Jacques's learning, with primitive means, to tell stories on film, and gives us evidence, too, of how fully the movies we know him by expressed his dreamy, passionate nature. This picture celebrates its subject by treating Demy's biography as an instance of a rare continuity between life and movie art—as a miraculous, ephemeral convergence, like "Lola." In French.—T.R. (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Jurassic Park—Steven Spielberg's warm-blooded, state-of-the-art dinosaurs are a lot speedier than their nearest movie kin, the galumphing atomic-mutant monsters that crunched Japanese cities under their feet in the fifties and early sixties, and that enables the filmmaker to create dynamic stalk-and-chase sequences. But neither the carnivorous dinos nor the placid herbivores inspire anything close to awe, even with the aid of audience stimulants like surging symphonic music (by the shameless John Williams) and repeated closeups of wide-eyed, openmouthed actors. The screenplay, which is credited to Michael Crichton and David Koepp, reduces Crichton's intricately constructed novel to its bare bones: people running away from hungry animals. For all the ingenuity of the movie's engineering, "Jurassic Park" doesn't have the imagination—or the courage—to take us any place we haven't been a thousand times before. It's just a creature feature on amphetamines.— T.R. (6/28/93) (34th St. East, First & 62nd Cinemas, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, Ziegfeld, Regency, and Metro Cinema.)

Last Action Hero—Here's a new idea: a thriller where the thrills lead nowhere. A boy named Danny (Austin O'Brien), bored at school and frightened at home, is enthralled by the screen exploits of Jack Slater (Arnold Schwarzenegger). With the help of a magic ticket, he crosses into Jack's world: an unreal place, where the hero always wins under a roasting sun and never gets more than a flesh wound. His adversaries may look like clichés—Charles Dance as a quiet hit man; Anthony Quinn, in his traditional look-at-me mode, as a Sicilian mobster—but that is precisely the point: movie conventions exist to be mocked, and "Last Action Hero" is determined to have fun with them. There isn't a trace of acid; the director, John McTiernan, remains devoted to the genre that he mastered in "Die Hard." The movie may be unsettling to its young audience, and it wears out its welcome, but it's a bright and daring direction for Schwarzenegger to have taken, and therefore one that he may live to regret.—A.L. (7/5/93) (Baronet, and Coronet. . . . ¶ 34th Street Showplace, Orpheum VII, Waverly, 84th Street Sixplex, and National Twin; through July 22.)

Made in America—TV-soap star Nia Long plays a brilliant, beautiful black high-school senior who discovers that her mother's husband died before she was even conceived, that her Afrocentrist mother (Whoopi Goldberg) was artificially inseminated, and that the sperm donor of record—whom she insists on calling her father—is a white, Barnum-like car salesman (Ted Danson). For half the running time, Danson pratfalls while Goldberg and Long burn; later, when Goldberg and Danson get cozy and Long objects, it becomes a failed tearjerker. All the crowd-pleasing guffaws are in the trailer, and they occur only when the plot turns. It's like a novel whose energy goes into funny chapter headings. Luckily, Will Smith, as Long's best friend, takes the lurches in his lanky stride—he's in the odd position of being the comic relief in a comedy. Directed by Richard Benjamin.—M.S. (23rd St. West Triplex, and Criterion Center.)

Much Ado About Nothing—On the sunny side of the Bard. Kenneth Branagh leads us through the tiffs and deceptions of Shakespeare's comedy, all shot in and around a Tuscan villa. Branagh does not pay much heed to the virtues of restraint. This is confirmed by most of the performances—Branagh and Emma Thompson as Benedick and Beatrice, splashing out with grand comic gestures, and a mangy Dogberry from an unintelligible Michael Keaton. The movie's jollity feels forced—it's more of a guided tour than a relaxed show of wit. What potency there is comes from the characters who refuse to be gripped by good cheer—Don John, played by Keanu Reeves as a pinup with malice, and Don Pedro, played by Denzel Washington, whose cool gravity shames the rest of the movie.—A.L. (5/10/93) (Angelika Film Center, First & 62nd Cinemas, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)



ISADORE SELTZER

At the Public Theatre, Paolo and Vittorio Taviani's "The Sun Also Shines at Night."

The Music of Chance—Jim Nashe (Mandy Patinkin) is a mixture of tough guy and wandering spirit. On a country road he picks up Pozzi (James Spader), a gambler down on his luck. In one of the random, risky twists in which the film specializes, Nashe decides to help him out. They go to a lonely country house, inhabited by a pair of wealthy oddballs called Flower (Charles Durning) and Stone (Joel Grey), who trounce Pozzi at poker and then demand an unusual payment: he and Nashe must build a stone wall on the grounds. From here on the movie becomes an unlikely fable about power and freedom, as Nashe and Pozzi are put through their paces like creatures of an author's cruel fancy. Philip Haas does well to curb the pretentiousness in all this; he cuts Paul Auster's original novel back to the bone and toughens the progress of the plot. There's nothing he can do about Spader's silly, unconvincing Pozzi, but Patinkin is a great help; he looks so grave and laid-back that you almost end up believing in the whole thing.—A.L. (6/7/93) (Paris.)

Orlando—Sally Potter's film is based on Virginia Woolf's 1928 novel. The story is a fragile piece of whimsy about an English nobleman born in the Elizabethan era who does not grow old or die and thus becomes the central figure in a series of historical tableaux that take the viewer right into the twentieth century; at a certain point, the title character discovers that he has turned into a woman. Potter (who also wrote the screenplay) takes Woolf's exercise in frivolity awfully seriously; the movie is like a Benny Hill sketch performed with fringe-theatre solemnity. And if it weren't for bad acting, this picture wouldn't have any acting at all. Tilda Swinton, who plays Orlando, may not actually wink at the audience, but she always looks as if she were about to. Her smug performance is perfectly suited to the film's arch, knowing tone.—T.R. (6/14/93) (Angelika Film Center, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Sleepless in Seattle—A romantic comedy, of sorts. The romance is airy and distant, because the lovers never meet until the final scene, and the comedy is kind of wistful, because it was directed by Nora Ephron. She is still a writer at heart, and it shows—there are scenes here that linger well past their bedtime, all for the sake of a few good lines. Tom Hanks plays Sam, left miserable by the death of his wife, with only his young son, Jonah (Ross Malinger), to console him. The consolation goes a bit far; Jonah rings up a radio talk show to say that his dad needs love (this is almost unwatchable, but grit your teeth and stay with it). Many listeners melt with sympathy, none more so than Annie (Meg Ryan), in Baltimore, shortly to be married and none too happy about it. For the rest of the movie, fate—and Jonah—do their best to bring the couple together, despite the continent that divides them. The result is sweet and moody, and richly photographed by Sven Nykvist, but you can't help feeling shortchanged; Hanks and Ryan have quick wits, and funny faces to match—they should be striking sparks off each other, not mooching around waiting for something to happen. Hanks has a few goofy outbursts, and there is lively backup from Rosie O'Donnell and Rob Reiner as helpful friends, but anyone expecting another "When Harry Met Sally . . ." will be disappointed. At least Harry *met* Sally.—A.L. (7/19/93) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 19th Street East 6, 34th Street Showplace, Beekman, Orpheum VII, 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs (1937)—Despite its European never-never-land setting and an outright horrifying villainess, the Disney version of the Grimm's fairy tale is a pleasing, down-to-earth American princess fantasy. Disney gave us a Snow White who whistles while she works, enlists an entire peaceable kingdom of animals to help her do dishes and windows, and succeeds at getting seven childlike, scruffy, and bumptious men—who appear to be made of plant bulbs and partly filled potato sacks—to clean up their acts. In her own fluty tones, she means business. The animation is literal-minded but luxurious.—M.S. (Sutton, 23rd St. West Triplex, and Olympia. . . . ¶ Village East Cinemas, and Murray Hill Cinemas; through July 22, matinées only. . . . ¶ Embassy; through July 22.)

What's Love Got to Do with It—The film version of Tina Turner's life isn't bad, considering that her story inconveniently lacks the tragic ending that filmmakers usually require to give shape to the rambling, unstructured existence of a musician. Tina, at fifty-three, is still performing and recording, and in the absence of the snuffed-out-in-her-prime option the screenwriter, Kate Lanier, and the director, Brian Gibson, have constructed the movie as a kind of feminist survival story: Tina (Angela Bassett) rises to fame as part of a husband-and-wife act, the Ike and Tina Turner Revue, but then breaks away from her brutal, domineering spouse (Laurence Fishburne) and climbs back to the top of the charts on her own. Bassett scrupulously imitates Tina's spectacular dance moves—the musical numbers are superbly staged—but there's no let-it-rip joy in her performances, and not much sex either. Fishburne's astonishing portrayal of Ike is what holds the movie together. The actor builds, in precise increments, a devastating portrait of a macho control freak; he even finds a kind of ghastly humor in the character's madness.—T.R. (6/28/93) (Village Theatre VII, Murray Hill Cinemas, and Chelsea Cinemas. . . . ¶ Cinema I, 86th Street East Twin, 84th Street Sixplex, and Embassy 1; through July 22. . . . ¶ Embassy; starting July 23.)

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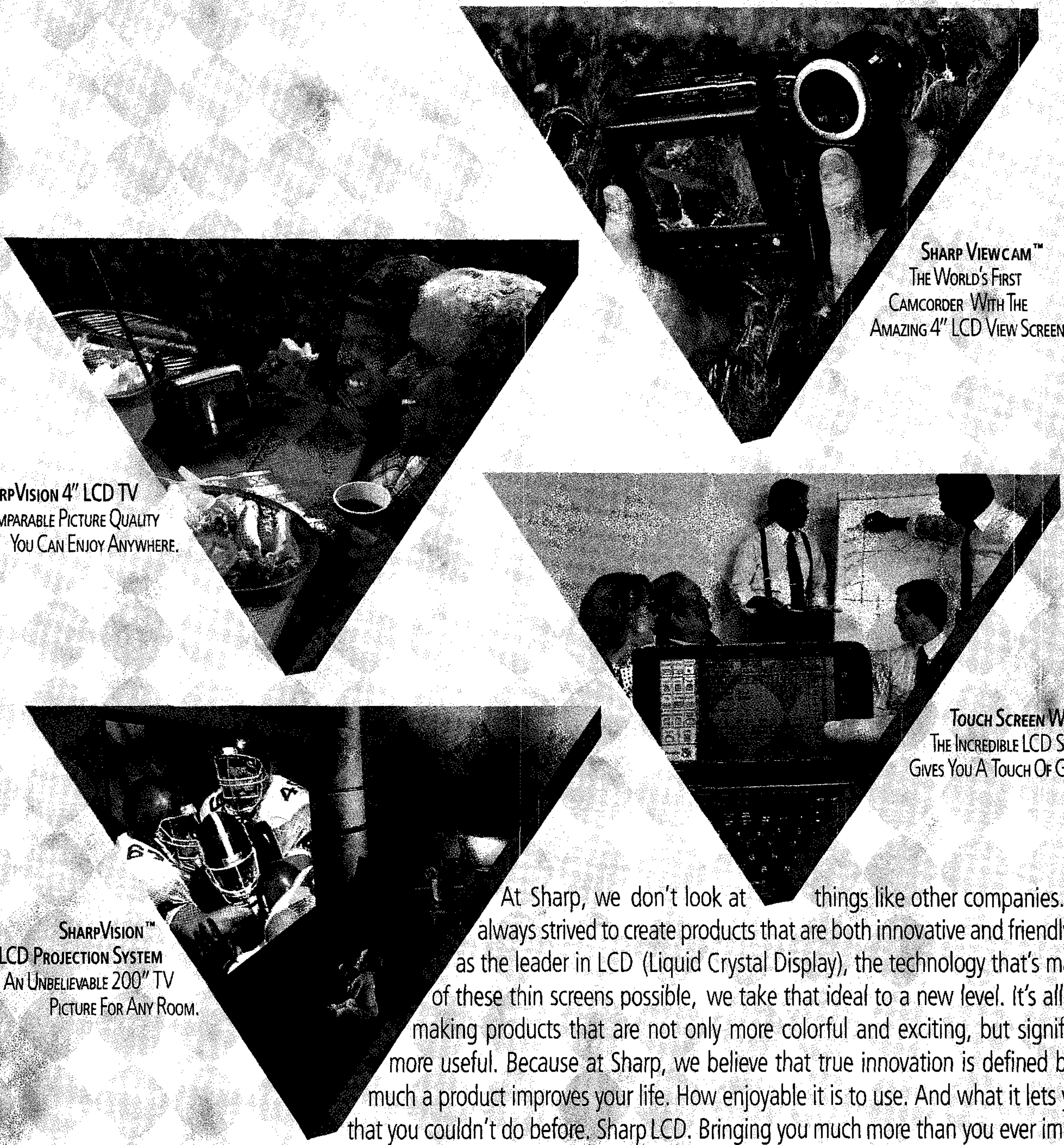

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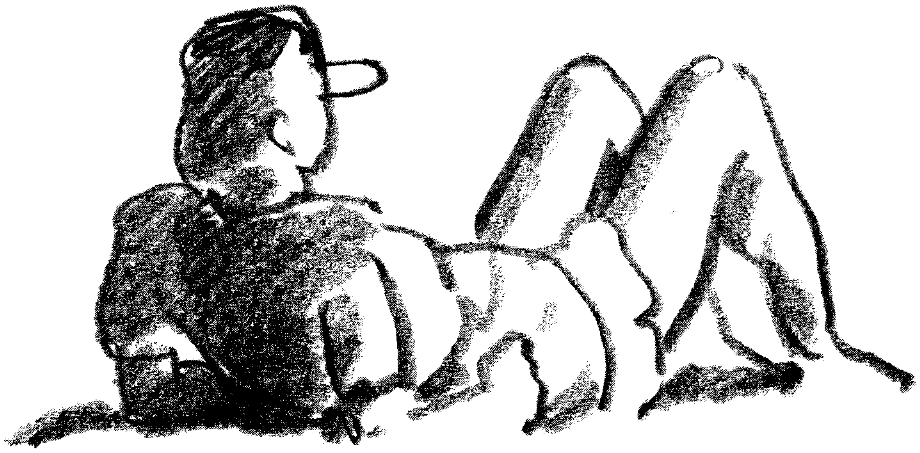
THE TALK OF THE TOWN

INTO BATTLE

According to Martin Dunn, who last week was appointed the editor of the *Daily News*, the stage is set for a ferocious New York tabloid war, and he is looking forward to it eagerly. "There'll be a very, very, very competitive battle with the *Post*," he said, with relish, on the phone from Boston, where he had just resigned as the editor of Rupert Murdoch's *Herald* after only four and a half months in the job. The conditions for war are now just right: after a series of debilitating upheavals, both the *News* and the *Post*, he said, had at last achieved stability—the *News* under Mortimer Zuckerman and the *Post* under Mr. Murdoch. The heavy guns are thus in place, well furnished with ammunition. But how is the war to be fought? "I have a million ideas," Mr. Dunn said. "But I don't want them known in South Street." But if he wouldn't talk in any detail about his plans, he promised that, whatever happened, he wouldn't be drawn into taking the *News* down-market. "If you took it down-market, you'd lose readership loyalty. People aspire upward in their newspaper reading habits. The *News* will hold its own in the middle market." Mr. Dunn also said that the *News* would "highlight the good things" about New York, because people grow weary of murder and mayhem. "It's too easy to harp on about the downside of New York," he said.

Such high-minded sentiments are more typical of newspaper owners and publishers than of British tabloid editors, who are notoriously unsqueamish in their pursuit of circulation, yet Mr. Dunn has been a British tabloid editor—and, in fact, served for a year and a half as the deputy editor of Mr. Murdoch's *Sun*, the most unequivocally down-market daily in the Western world. Even so, he is not seen as the Rottweiler type. Boyish, fresh-faced, single, and thirty-eight years old, he is described by former Fleet Street colleagues as a nice, modest, unpretentious man. That was perhaps why when he was on the *Sun* he was used as the paper's spokesman on radio and television—"defending the indefensible," as one former colleague put it. Then, in 1991, when he was made the editor of *Today*, another Murdoch-owned London tabloid, he achieved the impressive feat of raising its circulation from about four hundred and fifty thousand a day to about five hundred and forty thousand while actually making it appear more serious. After that achievement, Mr. Murdoch made him the editor of the Boston *Herald*.

This brings us to the British question. Such has been the proliferation of British journalists in the world of magazines in recent times that "The British Are Coming" was chosen this year as the theme of the Delacorte Forum at Columbia University, an annual event "to consider issues of importance to magazine editors, writers, and readers." So far, less attention has been paid to the new British domination of the New York tabloid scene. Of the city's three tabloids, only *Newsday* is edited by an American—Donald Forst. The two top generals in the forthcoming tabloid war will both be British mercenaries: Mr. Dunn at the *News* and Kenneth Chandler—another former editor of Murdoch's *Herald*—at the *Post*. They are both men whose careers were made by Mr. Murdoch, and they both feel loyalty and gratitude toward him. Mr. Dunn said his defection to the *News* had cost him much soul-searching. "I never thought I would leave News Corp," he said, referring to Mr. Murdoch's media empire. "There were only two or three jobs in the world that would have tempted me away, and this was one of them." Another, he said, would have



OLIVER WILLIAMS

been the editorship of one of the two most popular British tabloids.

Did he feel at all self-conscious about being British in his new job? "No," he said. "Journalism is a peculiarly international business. Maybe it takes you a while to get into the issues and the historical context of stories, but presentation is the key to success—presenting the news in palatable form, making people want to read it." That was what Anthea Disney, the Fleet Street-trained editor of *TV Guide*, who is now an American citizen, declared at the Delacorte Forum last February to be a particularly British skill. "They know how to make you want to read a story," she said then. "And—it's something that I have to say—when I work with American editors I find they don't have the skill as much as British editors do."

Preparing to do battle with the *Post*, Mr. Dunn also spoke of the value of having worked in "the brutally competitive world" of the British tabloids, saying that in London "we go to the fire every day." (Seven tabloids are currently published daily in London, with combined sales of more than eleven and a half million copies.) Nevertheless, it was only after Mr. Dunn had had the experience of editing an American paper that Mr. Zuckerman finally decided to hire him for the *News*. Mr. Zuckerman had first talked to him about the job last fall, when Mr. Dunn was still working in London, and Mr. Dunn had been so confident of a successful outcome that he actually resigned as the editor of *Today*. But then Mr. Zuckerman broke off the negotiations. "This was primarily because of my concern about the ability of a Brit to edit a New York newspaper," he said last week. "But then I discovered he had earlier lived in New York for six years, and I was greatly impressed by what he did on the Boston *Herald*, where he showed an ability to combine serious reporting and journalism with the drama and presentation that are needed in a tabloid." He now hoped that Mr. Dunn would stay for many years on the *News*, "to build a culture and attitude that would work over a long period of time."

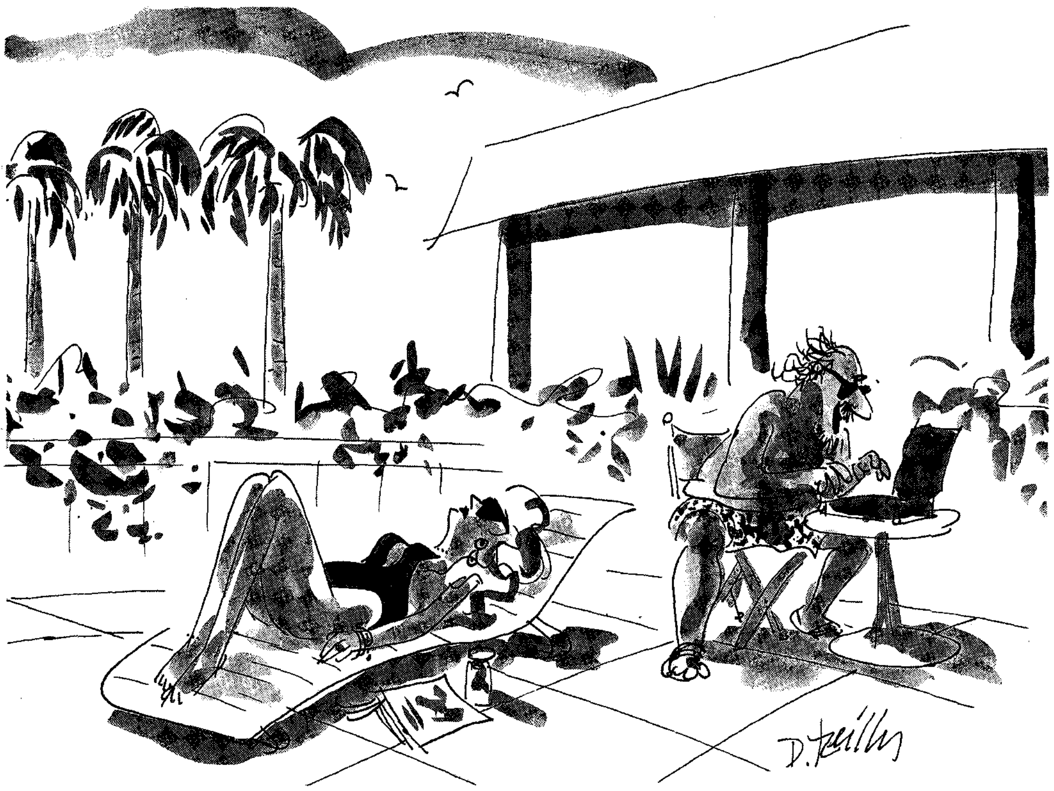
BODYWORK

SITTING in the bar of The Players, on Gramercy Park, Charles Roman grasped his left wrist tightly with his right hand and tugged on it. Mr. Roman, who is eighty-six, was demonstrating one of a set of Dynamic-Tension exercises invented by Charles Atlas, the great muscleman, who was Mr. Roman's business partner for more than forty years. "You resist with one arm and then pull with the other, so you're developing both your biceps and your triceps," he explained. Mr. Roman—a slim, soft-spoken man with white hair—has performed these exercises for forty minutes a day over the past sixty-four years. "It's amazing what it can do for your health," he said. "I don't remember the last time I was ill. I had arthritis once, about ten years ago, but it disappeared."

Charles Roman joined the Charles Atlas Company in 1929. "You couldn't find a more genteel, sweet man, yet he was so strong," he said of Atlas. After Atlas's death, in 1972, Mr. Roman continued to run the company, and now he owns it. However, after six decades of selling Dynamic-Tension by mail order, he is thinking of retiring. "The business was my first love, I guess, next to my wife," he said. "But, being realistic, I think it's time to turn it over to younger, more energetic people." Mr. Roman said that he has found a probable buyer; if the deal goes through, he expects to work as an adviser to the new owner, but will devote most of his time to flying, boating, and golfing. "I love to fly airplanes," he said.

Mr. Roman met Charles Atlas just after graduating from New York University and going to work as a copywriter for a Manhattan advertising agency that had the Atlas account. Atlas, whose real name was Angelo Siciliano, was already famous. Roman had seen pictures of him, in newsreels, entered in Madison Square Garden's 1922 physical-culture show as America's Most Perfectly Developed Man. "I was impressed," Mr. Roman recalled. "His physique had grace and symmetry. It wasn't grotesque. Nobody in those days had bodies like they have now, they didn't take steroids."

Charles Roman's advertisements for Dynamic-Tension attracted so many customers that Atlas offered him a fifty-percent stake in the company. One of his ads called "The Dance Floor Hog" included the line "Now *it's my turn, you* dance-floor hog." But he acknowledged that his favorite advertisement was the cartoon in



"It's a new take on 'Snow White.' The prince turns out to be a lesbian."

which a "ninety-seven-pound weakling" who gets bullied at the beach transforms himself into a muscle-bound Adonis. That cartoon was accompanied by Mr. Roman's classic line "Hey, quit kicking sand in my face." "It's a small part of Americana today," he pointed out delightedly. "When George Bush made a speech during the Gulf War, he said that Saddam Hussein is 'a classic bully who thinks he can get away with kicking sand in the face of the world.' I read it in the New York *Times*. My wife was sitting next to me. I said, 'Read this thing, dear, and see if you recognize anything.' I felt kind of proud."

SHRINE

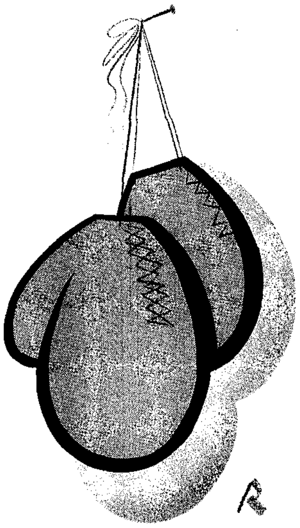
Philatelists are a large and varied group (Eisenhower collected stamps; so did Gerald Ford), and soon they will have a kind of national shrine of their own. The National Postal Museum, in Washington, will open to the public at the end of this month. It's a five-room gallery in the old City Post Office Building, just west of Union Station, on Capitol Hill. Visitors can inspect all sorts of postal artifacts: battered rural mailboxes, a postal sled from New Hampshire, tattered Confederate stamps. The museum is part of the Smithsonian Institution, and contains over twelve million stamps. It's said to be the third most valuable collection the Smithsonian has, after gems and coins.

The director is James H. Bruns, a philatelist from way back. An amiable, bearded man of forty-five, he is the author of six books, including "The United States Catalogue of Souvenir Cards" and "The Philatelic Truck." In 1984, he joined the Smithsonian as its curator of postal history—a position that his father had held before him. The elder Bruns wrote a philatelic column for the New York *Herald Tribune*, and once designed a line of stamps for the government of Liberia.

For philatelists, imperfections hold great appeal. Some of the very first United States airmail stamps were issued, in 1918, with the airplane design inverted. They're worth approximately a hundred thousand dollars apiece now, and the Smithsonian has one of them. Some of the stamps of King Farouk of Egypt are in the collection, and so are some of F.D.R.'s. Mr. Bruns is a big, hearty man,

TEN COUNT

It was supposed to be a melancholy scene, but there's always theatre at the fights. The canvas was lit from above—a pool of neon blue. The boxing writer Bert Sugar, in his straw hat, wandered ringside, shaking hands, and was trailed by a camera crew from ABC. The great middleweight Emile Griffith was also glad-handing. A broad-shouldered fighter with a milling, pell-mell style, he'd been viciously mugged off Forty-second Street a while ago, people said, but was on the mend. Madison Square Garden's Paramount Theatre—"the little farty Paramount," Sugar called it—was less than half full, but the crowd was boisterous, especially when the fighters snaked toward the ring, circling their fists in the air. People complained about the quality of the matches—"too many tomato cans" was the phrase—but there was plenty of excitement at ringside.



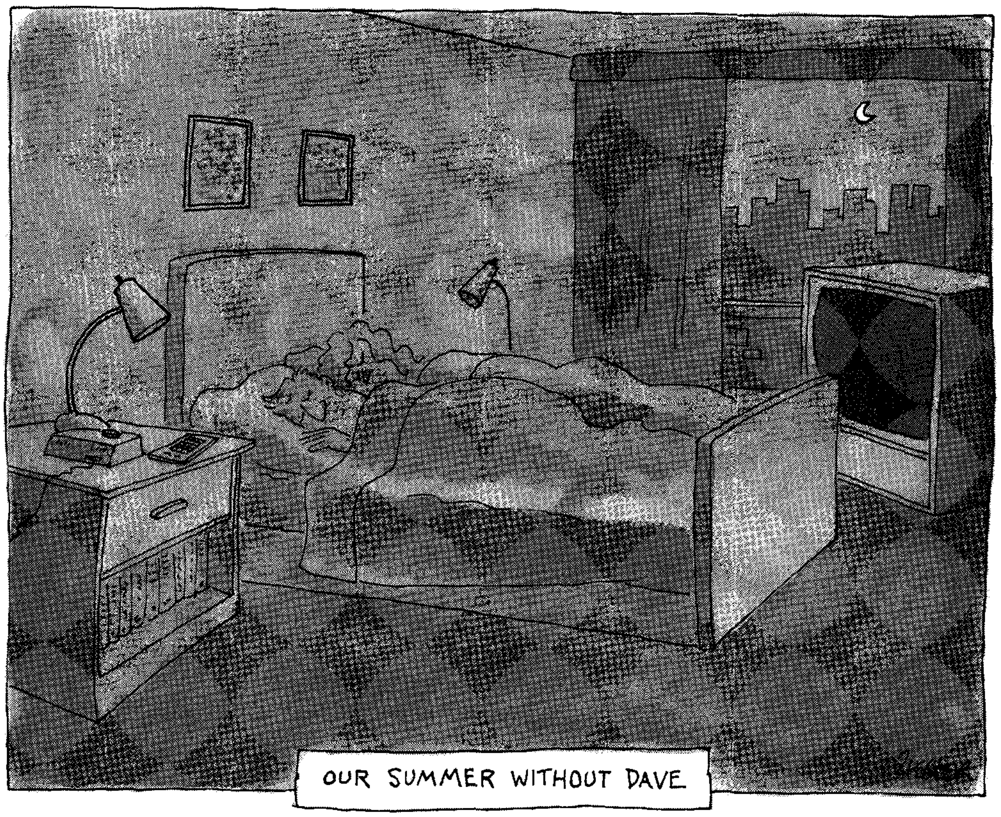
The last fight night at the Garden was cause for great lamentation, both in the press ("REQUIEM FOR GARDEN FIGHT NIGHTS" was the *Times* headline that day) and among the graying, increasingly frayed members of what Red Smith used to call the Fight Mob. "People I'll never see again," Sugar said later on. Between rounds, ring girls strolled along the ropes in their fish-net stockings, and the old boozers whistled and jeered. People kept coming up to Emile Griffith and pounding him on the back. "I don't got time to sit down," he said, smiling brightly, "but I love it!" Don King wasn't in the building, but the old manager Lou Duva was there: a cheery little man with a wrecked face.

"This is going to be a short one," Dr. Gerard Varlotta said during the first bout. He was the ringside doctor in the blue corner, where, during the fights, the seconds raved at their men. He looked natty, in two-tone loafers and a green suit, and he knew his business. The fight ended when a boxer from North Carolina got gashed over the right eye; some thought he was butted. Then a lightweight named Peter Nieves came bending backward through the ropes, a foot or so from Dr. Varlotta's head. He'd been trying to fight inside against a taller man—Juan (El Flaco) Negron, from Newark. Negron, a spindly, awkward fighter, wore spacious purple trunks with a black fringe. He threw looping, bolo punches, which Nieves ducked until the eighth round, when an overhand right knocked him silly. "Time to go to work," Dr. Varlotta said.

The last punch of the evening was thrown by the middleweight Lonnie Bradley, from 151st Street, in Harlem, not far from where Emile Griffith grew up. Emile was quite complimentary about the punch, although he probably didn't see it. "Every time I look around, oops, there's somebody on the floor," he said. Bradley knocked out another middleweight, Marcel Huffaker, in just ninety-three seconds. Huffaker had to sit on a stool for a few minutes to clear his head, and Bradley, a wiry boxer with a child's face, stayed in the ring for a time to make sure he was all right. Mr. Huffaker was probably a tomato can, but the aficionados were impressed by the force of the blow. "A short left hook," one of them said as people began to file slowly out of the building onto Seventh Avenue. "Joe Louis was famous for that—six inches and good night."

—Adam Platt

ROBERT RISKO



OUR SUMMER WITHOUT DAVE

and he tells stories with gusto. Reindeer have been used to deliver the United States mail, he says, and dogs have, too. During the eighteen-fifties, camels were imported to deliver mail in the deserts of the Southwest, but they didn't like the rocky surfaces, and the postal service let them go.

The British developed the first stamps, in 1840, and the first philatelist is said to have been a woman in London, who used them to paper her walls. Today, there are around twenty-two million stamp collectors in the United States. "A lot of people consider philatelists to be peculiar, private people, but they're really not," Mr. Bruns says. "I think we're unfairly categorized sometimes. It's like attorneys—do they get excited about attorney jokes?" Mr. Bruns says that potato starch was the first substance used as glue on the back of American stamps, and later cassava root was used. When the Japanese overran the cassava fields in Indonesia during the Second World War, the postal service switched to cornstarch. "Now the glue is synthetic," he says. "Is it kosher? Yes."

Mr. Bruns has a security staff of thirty-five, and hidden cameras are everywhere in the new museum. On the floor are marble tiles designed to look like stamped envelopes, and old mail planes hang from the ceiling. The complex cost fifteen million dollars to build, and Mr. Bruns expects over a million visitors each year. In his spare time, he's working on a book about airmail pilots. "Lindbergh was one," he says. "He tended to bail out a lot."

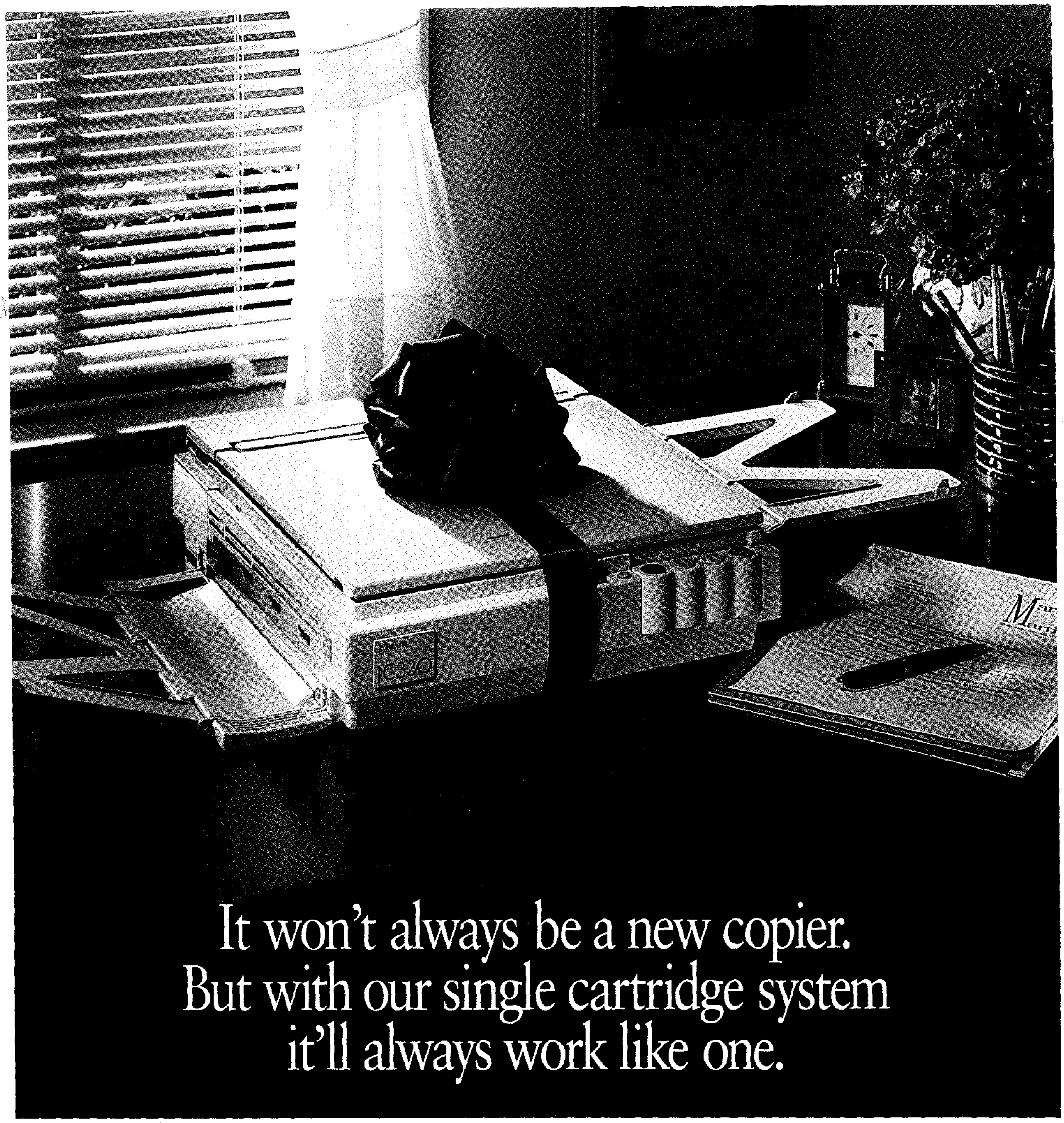
TAKING THE HEAT

GENE HATHAWAY, whose official title is the Official-in-Charge of the National Weather Service station at Newark Airport, has a sign on his office door that says "Kneel—you are in the presence of greatness." This may be a form of overcompensation, for meteorology does not rank among the more highly esteemed sciences. It's not that there's anything disreputable about it—just that its image is sullied by association with irritating television weathermen. But Mr. Hathaway deserves some appreciation. It has been a long couple of weeks.

His outpost at Newark served as the unofficial headquarters of our recent heat wave. Oppressive though the weather was at the other official measuring points around New York—Central Park, and LaGuardia and Kennedy Airports—it was worse at Newark. Mr. Hathaway and his colleagues measured four straight days—July 7th to July 10th—of a hundred-degree-plus temperatures, and tied the all-time high for Newark: a hundred and five degrees, on July 8th. Then, on the twelfth, when the temperature had fallen back into the middle nineties, Mr. Hathaway had to rush off and determine whether a tornado had touched down in a suburb two days earlier. (After he examined the pattern of damaged trees and houses, his verdict was yes.) "When it rains, it pours—heh, heh," he said, huffing a little in the sticky heat.

The Weather Service office is in a two-story cement-block structure named Building 51. In the main room, where Mr. Hathaway's subordinates work, the principal business is "doing the ob"—making hourly observations and reporting them to the National Meteorological Center, in Silver Spring, Maryland. To do the ob, the meteorologists must check the digital readout on an especially accurate hygrothermometer, for the current temperature and dew point, and monitor a couple of machines that record the wind on what look like seismographs. They can also consult a television that is perpetually tuned to a radar shot that includes the Newark area. The real action at Newark, though, is where the weather happens—outdoors.

On a drive out to see the measuring devices, a meteorological technician named Joe Schenk said, "We share the space there with the Port Authority. It's where they keep all the cars that have been abandoned or wrecked on the airport grounds." Bordered by the New Jersey Turnpike on one side and airport runways on the other, this otherwise uninhabited lot smells of jet fuel and of burning rubber, from the scrape of landing gear wheels on the tarmac. The weather instruments occupy a fenced-off area about eight yards by ten. There is an anemometer, with little spinning cups, to measure wind speed; a metal jug that looks like a milk can, to measure rain; a laser-beam ceilometer, a little box with a glass window, which measures cloud height; and the hygrothermometer itself, which resembles a foot-high mushroom. The instruments sit on a stretch of ragged grass, surrounded by hundreds of acres of pavement. "The Weather Service requires the measurements to be taken on grass," Mr. Schenk explained. "Our numbers would be even hotter without it." ♦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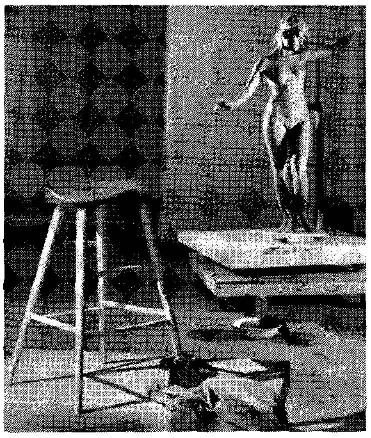

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THE WORLD OF BUSINESS

TAKING THE DARE

As First Boston's top managers walk out in search of sweeter deals, Wall Street is watching to see if the company can make it playing by the new rules.

BY JAMES B. STEWART

On Thursday, March 4th, with a sense of crisis mounting, Archibald Cox, Jr., the chief executive of the venerable investment-banking firm First Boston, summoned his managing directors to a dinner meeting at the Links Club, on East Sixty-second Street. Thirty bankers, the backbone of the firm, gathered around a large square table on the fourth floor, a venue more commonly devoted to leisurely replays of the United States Open at Baltusrol or the fifteenth hole at Winged Foot. This evening, they were angry, worried, and spoiling for a fight, and they were not disappointed.

The same day, the leaders of First Boston's prestigious energy group—led by Art Reichstetter in New York and Rick Gordon in Houston—had defected to Merrill Lynch & Company. Reichstetter was one of the best-known energy specialists in the country, and Gordon was his counterpart in natural gas. They were veterans of such seminal events as the takeover battles for Phillips Petroleum and USX and the merger of British Petroleum and Standard Oil and of Houston Natural Gas and Internorth. Even more important than the considerable revenue they generated was the sense that Reichstetter and Gordon were among a handful of bankers who embodied the culture of First Boston: they had spent virtually their entire careers there. No transient mercenaries—"Hessians," in the parlance of investment banking—they had stuck with the firm through difficult times: the post-eighties hangover that had hit First Boston especially hard. Compounding the discontent were recently announced 1992 pay packages that fell far below the prevailing rates on Wall Street, and were far less than many felt they'd been explicitly promised.

John M. Hennessey, the chief executive of CS First Boston, which is First Boston's parent and, in turn, a subsidiary of Crédit Suisse, the Swiss banking giant, began the meeting even before the arrival of Cox, who was back at the firm's headquarters trying to talk still more members of the energy group out of defecting. According to people who were there, Hennessey seemed ebullient, surprisingly fresh (he'd just flown in from London), and completely out of touch with the turmoil. After a few platitudes about how well the firm was doing, he ceded the floor to Robert Diamond, Jr., a co-head of fixed-income sales and trading who had recently come to First Boston from Morgan Stanley, and Diamond declared, "The real problem is not compensation—the real problem is a revenue problem."

That put some people over the edge, participants say, and a hubbub broke out, with managing directors banging fists on the table and shouting "How can you say this?" and "How can you have Bob Diamond tell us this?" and "I'm embarrassed to be working at First Boston!" Cox arrived in the midst of the melee and, after taking his seat, next to Hennessey, pulled his chair back, as if to distance himself from the president of the parent company. Finally, as one participant recalls it, Richard Bott, a respected senior partner in corporate finance, broke in, telling Hennessey, "Jack, you don't get it. People in this room are going to walk in the next few weeks."

And they did. Since that meeting,

ANDRZEJ CZECZOT

more than a dozen managing directors have left First Boston, including two—William Reid and Richard Kauffman—who were even more closely identified with the firm than Reichstetter. Besides the decimated energy department—a dozen of its investment bankers eventually joined Merrill Lynch—the firm has lost twenty-five members of its fixed-income and mortgage-backed-securities groups, including the co-heads of bond operations, bond research, and private placements. Last week, the toll claimed Cox himself.

In recent years, Wall Street has gone through extraordinary upheavals as it has struggled to leave the eighties behind, but the crisis at First Boston signifies more than the survival of yet another respected Wall Street institution. It mirrors an ongoing struggle for the very soul of Wall Street, which pits the swaggering individualists who once personified American-style investment banking against faceless institutions like Crédit Suisse; indeed, Crédit Suisse now seems determined to remake First Boston in its own profitable, if staid, image. If the eighties were the era of the star system, dominated by the likes of First Boston's Bruce Wasserstein, the head of mergers and acquisitions, the nineties have brought the resurgence of the institutions, marked by record profits at firms like Merrill Lynch, Goldman Sachs, and Morgan Stanley. During the eighties, investment bankers were fond of saying that their firms' most important assets "walked out the door every night." Now they like to say, "You can't destroy a franchise." As the defections and dismissals continue, First Boston may constitute the ultimate test of those competing notions.

It is already hard to remember the glamour and the power that emanated from First Boston during its heyday, in the mid-eighties. First Boston had always commanded one of the five coveted "special bracket" rankings that put a firm's name among those at the top of tombstone ads announcing major deals. By 1985, it was one of the top three, and was pushing hard to overtake the traditional leaders, Morgan Stanley and Goldman Sachs. In those years, First Boston's stylishly conservative offices, in a new Park Avenue skyscraper over the Racquet and Tennis Club, had a Camelot quality: they were populated by what seemed impossibly rich, tall, handsome young men and a handful of equally attractive young women. It bore no resemblance to the Animal House environment of Salomon Brothers, or the nouveau-riche one of Drexel Burnham Lambert, or the staid, conformist one of Morgan Stanley. First Boston was also different from other firms in that it almost never seemed boring: its specialties, particularly mergers and acquisitions, put it in the forefront of trends transforming the business landscape. And it was aggressive: it pushed innovative strategies on clients instead of waiting passively for them to seek its advice.

No other firm so captured the aspirations of a younger generation. Richard Kauffman, a tall, athletic investment banker who embodied the First Boston reputation, was in charge of First Boston's analyst recruiting in the mid-eighties, when the firm was nearly overwhelmed with applications from college students for its analyst positions—a two-year entry-level training program. In 1986, he received more than four thousand job applications for seventy analyst positions. When he conducted interviews at Yale that year, the number of applicants swamped the available interview slots. That year, *Forbes* reported, First Boston got more than four hundred applications from Yale seniors alone—over thirty per cent of the graduating class. Yale maintains that the figure was greatly exaggerated, but it nevertheless became one of those otherwise obscure statistics which seem to define an era.

The engine of First Boston's rapid rise was Bruce Wasserstein and his partner, Joseph Perella, who played a significant role in nearly every major takeover during the decade. While rivals of theirs like Morgan and Goldman initially shunned the hostile-takeover bid, they embraced it, using bold tactics that stunned adversaries and usually left them in the hands of a First Boston client. They transformed the vocabulary of investment banking: "two-tier offers," "lock-up options," and—the most perilous—"bridge loans." Though Wasserstein, usually dishevelled, impatient, and abrupt, hardly fitted First Boston's image, he accounted for three hundred and fifty million dollars in revenue, or more than half the firm's total from investment banking, by 1987, and earned more than six million dollars for himself. In February of 1988, when the firm's

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leaders declined to remake the firm in Wasserstein's image, he and Perella quit to form the investment-banking firm Wasserstein Perella & Company. It was the harbinger of turmoil to come.

At the time of Wasserstein's defection, First Boston was still an independent company traded on the New York Stock Exchange. But in 1978, in order to strengthen its presence in European markets, it had joined with Crédit Suisse to launch a European affiliate, Crédit Suisse First Boston, and the deal had left Crédit Suisse with about a twenty-four-per-cent stake in First Boston. The Swiss had been for the most part passive investors, but as profits on Wall Street soured following the 1987 crash, and in the aftermath of Wasserstein's departure, Crédit Suisse flexed its muscles, boosted its stake to nearly half, and then took the company private, under the name CS First Boston.

First Boston employees ended up owning twenty-five per cent of the stock, and for many of them, including Kauffman, Reid, and Reichstetter, this ownership stake was sufficient incentive for staying with the firm, even though it was obvious that the Swiss were in control. For First Boston employees, "the Swiss" were personified by Rainer E. Gut, then fifty-five, who was the chairman of Crédit Suisse. He became the chairman of the new CS First Boston as well, and began showing up in the Park Avenue offices. Charming but taciturn, Gut seemed startled by the freewheeling atmosphere of American investment banking, notable for an absence of the layers of controls and the review committees that were dear to Swiss bankers, and for huge salaries and bonuses, a sharp contrast to conservatively paid European bankers. (To this day, no one at First Boston knows just how much Gut earns as head of Crédit Suisse, but people there believe it is less than the top investment bankers in New York get. One person characterizes the Swiss attitude as "It's a sin to make money.") Gut promptly swept out the management that had failed to placate Wasserstein, and installed as chairman Jack Hennessey, who had been a Deputy Assistant Treasury Secretary in the Nixon Administration and the chairman of CSFB in London, and, in that position, had worked closely with Gut. At First Boston, Hennessey, a Harvard graduate with patrician bearing, was looked upon by all as the agent of the Swiss.

Gut and Hennessey stepped into a situation far worse than anyone could have known. Wasserstein and Perella had left at almost the precise moment when the takeover boom began to implode. First Boston had just financed the ill-fated hostile takeover of Federated Department Stores by Robert Campeau. In its eagerness to prove that it was still a force in mergers and acquisitions, it failed to see the tide turning against it, and financed a series of increasingly precarious bids: for RJR Nabisco (it was outbid by Kohlberg Kravis Roberts); for Ohio Mattress (a deal now known to bond traders as "the burning bed"); for Jerrico (the owners of Long John Silver restaurants); and for American Medical International. These were all junk-bond deals in the twilight of the junk-bond era, and when the bonds couldn't be sold First Boston offered bridge loans to complete the transactions. In a bridge loan, a firm buys the bonds itself, expecting to dispose of them later, when conditions have improved. At the time, no one seemed to consider what might happen if the bridge went nowhere—if in fact the bonds could never be sold, or, even worse, if the issuer actually defaulted while the firm still held its position. What was important to First Boston was to prove that it could complete a deal—that it could still "kick some ass," as one veteran recently put it.

By late 1989, when the junk-bond market finally collapsed, all these deals were in serious trouble, and First Boston was stuck with huge positions, totalling more than $1.1 billion: $257 million in Federated, $230 million in Ohio Mattress, $200 million in Jerrico, and so on. To get the positions off its books, First Boston ultimately "sold" them to none other than Crédit Suisse. By late 1990, Crédit Suisse had to recapitalize First Boston, by injecting about $300 million in new capital.

In September of that year, to help stabilize the firm, Gut and Hennessey hired Archibald Cox, Jr., as First Boston's president and chief executive. Cox had been running Morgan Stanley's international operations in London. A trim, close-cropped man of six feet seven, he was the son of the Watergate independent prosecutor and carried an aura of integrity, derived in part from his father. He knew both Gut and Hennessey from his days in London, where he had cut a striking figure riding a bicycle to work every day. Cox was deemed a reassuring presence at the firm, someone who would be more diplomatic than Hennessey, yet would pose no danger of developing any of the star qualities identified with Wasserstein. Cox's arrival was also viewed as a setback for Hennessey, and, indeed, Hennessey ceded day-to-day management of the firm to him, though he retained his title of president and chief executive of CS First Boston. Many of the bankers most closely associated with the bridge-loan fiascoes were fired. Other key personnel were promoted: James R. Maher, who had replaced Wasserstein and Perella as the head of mergers and acquisitions, was made the head of investment banking; Bill Reid took charge of the high-yield finance group; and Richard Kauffman was made the head of equity capital markets.

Cox immediately set out to restore the morale that had been bruised by the bridge loans, the firings and management shuffle, and, especially, the poor pay in 1989 and the decline in value of the stock. Employees who became shareholders in 1988 had watched the stock lose about a third of its value. In 1989, the firm mustered a meagre eleven million dollars in total profits; salary and bonuses were paid mainly out of capital, and a large proportion was in stock. Reid, for example, received three hundred thousand dollars of his pay in stock. There were also some conditions: the stock didn't vest fully for three years, and if an employee left earlier the firm reserved the option of making the employee pay for the stock. In addition, the firm had lent its employees up to a million dollars to buy stock at the time of the buyout, before its value fell, and quitting meant paying back the loans immediately. "You felt like an indentured servant," one defector says, recalling that he had complained to Gut on one of the chairman's visits. Gut told him to stop whining, he says, because the firm had just lost five hundred million dollars, and Gut wanted him around to rebuild. This banker says, "Gut's attitude was 'You should kiss my feet.' "

But these measures did seem to work. On Wall Street at the end of 1990, there weren't many options: no one was hiring or giving out lavish bonuses. With the stock incentives and Cox's promises of higher pay to come, those remaining at First Boston plunged into their work, and the firm had a pretty good year—surprisingly good, given its recent crisis. It earned about two hundred and fifteen million dollars. Still, when bonuses were announced at the end of 1991, they were well below the prevailing rates at other Wall Street firms, which had had even better years than First Boston.

The lower pay was a direct reflection of the Swiss attitude toward investment banking. According to a participant in meetings of the group executive board, which set compensation policy, Cox, Maher, and other First Boston executives argued strenuously that First Boston had to match the bonuses at other Wall Street firms to maintain its franchise, even if that meant again dipping into capital. Their pleas got them nowhere. Gut, in particular, seemed agitated. "I don't understand why we're paying more than others as a percentage of revenues," one participant recalls Gut lecturing. "We can't do this. You have to build capital. We weren't as profitable. So why should the firm pay you if you're not as profitable? We have equity capital that's a third of our rivals', so you can't really compare."

Executives of most American corporations can surely sympathize with Gut's position: it hardly seems irrational to insist that pay correspond to performance. But that has not been the culture on Wall Street for the past decade. There pay has been purely a function of competition for the biggest stars. When the bonuses were announced, people were predictably disgruntled, especially because the firm had done so much better than the year before. One executive recalls meeting with Cox and saying, "Archie, I'd say my check is light by about thirty per cent." Cox reassured him, urging that he "give us time," and promised that 1992 would be different—that salaries and bonuses would again be competitive. Numerous current and former employees have recounted similar conversations and assurances. Morale was so bad that Cox held a series of meetings with various groups, speaking to between fifty and a hundred people at a time. On the pay issue, a participant recalls, he said, "I want you to know that this was handled badly. I had no role in this. I promise you that next year it will be done right. You will be paid competitively." In Cox's mind, this may not have constituted an explicit promise, but to his listeners it was a guarantee that their 1992 pay would match that at Merrill, Goldman, and Morgan. "He didn't say 'I'll try to pay you,' " one listener points out. "He said 'You will be paid.' "

Some were unconvinced. Group executive-board members had seen the 1992 budget approved by the Swiss. Given the Swiss parameters of compensation as a percentage of income, the bonuses wouldn't be any larger in 1992 than they'd been in 1991. "How can you make these promises?" one board member asked Cox, pointing to the budget numbers.

"Look, the firm is off to a wonderful start," Cox replied. "We're coining money." He confidently predicted that the firm would exceed its budgeted revenues.

But the firm had a bad quarter late last year. Trading losses of nearly two hundred million dollars in London coupled with some bad positions in Latin-American debt limited net income for the year to about a hundred and seventy-five million dollars, lower than the year before. In November, Cox issued orders to group heads to prepare budgets based on a flat bonus pool. Several group executives were so angry they refused to make any recommendations. Thomas Sexton, the head of fixed-income trading, the firm's single most profitable area, confronted Cox with a list of what he thought his people deserved, saying, in effect, "You find the money." Morale was so bad in Sexton's department that many traders seemed to drag their heels, further depressing the firm's earnings. Cox hastily convened a meeting to try to reassure people, but it did little to quell the grumbling. Two days before the bonus decisions were to be announced, managing directors got, without explanations, a sheet of paper from Hennessey and Cox listing their employees and their allotments. The bonuses seemed as bad as in 1991, and were even farther behind the rest of Wall Street, which had enjoyed a banner year. Moreover, although some of the compensation could be accelerated into 1992, to beat the rise in income taxes anticipated under President Clinton, everyone would have to pay interest from that time until the usual pay date in Feb-

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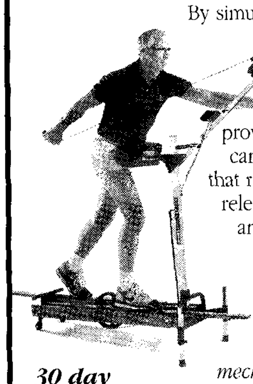

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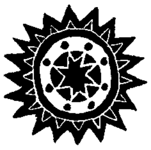
ruary—a nickel-and-dime approach that in the opinion of many embodied the stinginess of their Swiss owners. Making the bad feelings worse was news that the Swiss had decided to pay themselves a seventy-five-million-dollar "dividend" to recoup in part their huge 1990 capital investment. Managing directors began storming into Cox's office to charge that promises had been broken.

This, they say, is what has caused such a rift over the pay issue, more than the actual amount of the paychecks. The fact is, of course, that investment bankers, even those at the miserly First Boston, are paid princely sums by the standards of most Americans. A First Boston executive familiar with the bonus allocations says that the average First Boston partner made nearly eight hundred thousand dollars in 1992. The lowest junior partner made five hundred and seventy-five thousand dollars, and senior partners made a million and a half dollars. Admittedly, this trails the other special-bracket firms. Morgan Stanley is said to have "apologized" last year for compensation that averaged a million and a quarter dollars. Merrill Lynch, which had record earnings, pays just below that, and Goldman Sachs, a private partnership, is said to pay substantially more. Pressed on the subject of their compensation, the more contemplative of the First Boston bankers acknowledge that most people would love to be "underpaid" to the tune of several hundred thousand dollars. "Wall Street people are overpaid," one of the defectors concedes. "Four or five years out of school, you're making five hundred thousand dollars. That puts you in the top one or two per cent in the country." He pauses briefly. "But it is a free market."



The managing directors got various responses when they confronted Cox. Some say that Cox denied making any promises, which enraged them even more, and led to additional charges of duplicity. One says that Cox shrugged and told him, "I know you're not happy. No one's happy. But, look, no one left last year." Another reports that Cox said, "You can't expect to make as much as a partner here as you would at Morgan Stanley." This banker recalls, "I asked myself, 'Why not?' I had young kids not seeing their father and I worked every bit as hard as anyone at Morgan Stanley, so why shouldn't I make more?" A theme that seems to have arisen in many of these conversations is what some see as a "dare" strategy on the part of Hennessey and Gut—the notion that, despite all the grumbling and all the talk about the need to pay competitively, few would quit to go elsewhere. People were still showing up for work. The firm could get away with it.

It was in this tinderbox atmosphere that Cox called for the Links Club meeting in March. Two of the firm's longtime loyalists seemed to capture the gravity of the moment, according to those present. Bott, the senior partner in corporate finance, who had never raised his voice in complaint, warned Hennessey that First Boston "is a unique franchise in investment banking" and "you're going to lose it." Another senior partner warned, "Maybe the new First Boston will be very successful, but you'll lose the old First Boston. Maybe the new First Boston doesn't care."

That meeting, and Hennessey's hapless reponses to the many complaints aired at it, proved the last straw for some. Reid had been miserable over the low bonuses he had to pay his people; he hadn't had a good night's sleep in more than two months. Rick Gordon was so upset over the bonuses for his people that he dipped into his own pocket to pay them more. Now, people close to them say, both men felt their loyalty to the firm had been betrayed. "The culture of trust was broken," one person says. And the climate on Wall Street had changed considerably since the previous year, when job offers were scarce. Wall Street had record equity and debt offerings; even the junk-bond market was surging. Rival firms were flush with capital and needed experienced investment bankers to handle the demand for new placements.

The defections had increased as soon as First Boston actually began paying bonuses, on March 1st. The energy group, which included Reichstetter, Gordon, and two managing directors in Houston, defected days later. Sexton, the head of fixed-income bond operations, left soon afterward, as did Bill Reid, the head of the high-yield finance group.

Gut and Hennessey recognized that Reid's departure could trigger even more defections, so Gut flew to New York and on March 25th the firm held simultaneous dinner meetings in Manhattan for key personnel. The remaining "heavy hitters," as one executive puts it, including Richard Kauffman, who had led the recruiting at Yale, and Michael Koeneke, the head of mergers and acquisitions, were invited to join Gut himself at the Union Club. There, to the dismay of those listening, Gut seemed unconcerned about the defections, assuring his colleagues that people like Reichstetter and Reid were easily replaced. Referring to the 1990 bailout, one participant recalls, Gut suggested that he had saved First Boston and that they should be appreciative. This executive was unimpressed. "He talked like a European banker, with thousands of people working for him—we were just fungible. He doesn't understand how business is done in the U.S. He doesn't understand how important people are." Soon after the dinner, both Kauffman and Koeneke announced their resignations, and much of First Boston's M. & A. department threatened to follow.

It was by now clear that the "dare" strategy had backfired. Morale-boosting sessions were hastily organized, including a partners' meeting in Boca Raton at the end of May—a meeting conspicuously presided over by Hennessey rather than by Cox. Some of the investment bankers, including the restless M. & A. contingent, were able to negotiate guaranteed pay raises this year—in some cases of as much as a hundred per cent. Some are waiting to see if such pledges are honored; others acknowledge that the very need for arrangements like these suggests that First Boston is a long way from restoring its culture of trust.

In May, Crédit Suisse decided to consolidate its North American, European, and Asian divisions. It seemed obvious then that there would be no further need for a chief executive at First Boston in New York, for the combined firm would be run by a single chief executive. McKinsey & Company, the management consulting firm, was hired to perform a "strategic review" of First Boston and its prospects, a step that often precedes a management shake-up.

None of this can have been very pleasant for Cox. The departures had taken their toll; Cox genuinely liked and admired many who had left, and saw the momentum he had helped build fall apart. Some insist that he did all he could, especially in late 1992, to persuade Hennessey and Gut to honor the commitment to pay competitively but was rebuffed. Impressions to the contrary may have come from his efforts to carry out the decisions of his bosses, especially Hennessey, and to express their views on the matter rather than his own. Still, by the time the reorganization was announced Cox had warned Hennessey that he was considering resigning.

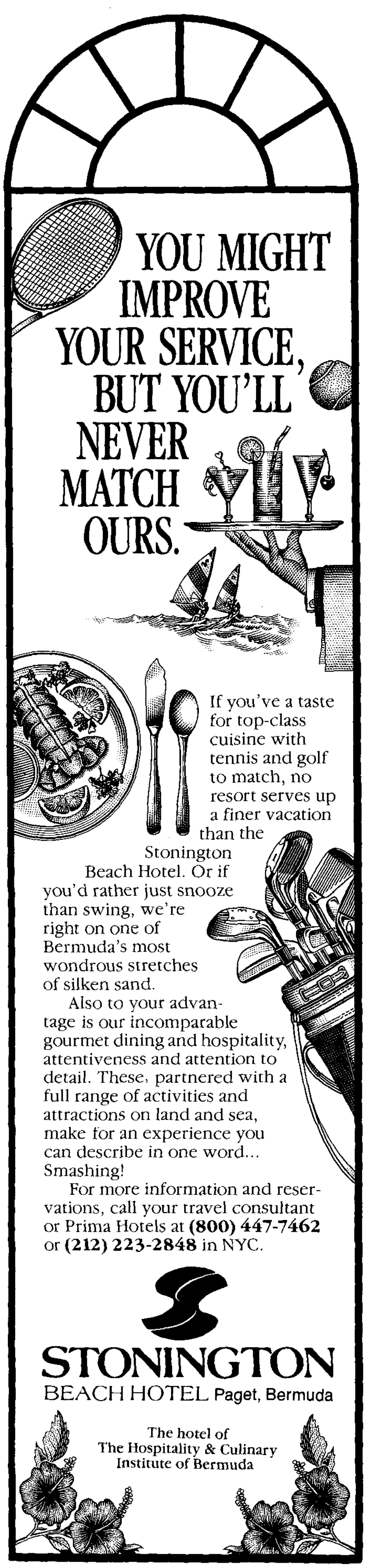
In mid-July, Cox flew to Switzerland for a final showdown with Gut and Hennessey. Having lost much of the support of the rank and file in New York, he needed a demonstration of support from above; best of all would be some assurance that he would succeed Hennessey as chief executive of the global firm. But people at First Boston speculate that Gut blamed Cox for much of the trouble. Gut hadn't known, they say, that Cox was making assurances about 1992 pay levels at the beginning of the year, and wouldn't have authorized it if he had. Hennessey, they say, had been increasingly alienated by what he saw as Cox's efforts to distance himself from unpopular decisions like the compensation policy. While Cox didn't ask for any promise that he would become chief executive, Gut and Hennessey didn't offer any. Instead, he was encouraged to stay on as co-head of investment banking in the combined firm, a significant post, to be sure, but one that would make him only one of several potential successors, and a clear demotion from his position as chief executive of First Boston. Surely Gut and Hennessey had anticipated the consequences. Cox flew back to New York, and First Boston announced his resignation on July 13th. Still a bicycle enthusiast, Cox is reviewing his options, including starting his own firm, and is expected to devote more of his time to a small company he owns an interest in that manufactures expensive, high-performance bicycles.

It was perhaps inevitable that Cox would bear much of the blame for the firm's current plight. Caught between his Swiss masters, who were intent on transforming First Boston into a firm that operated on what they considered rational financial principles, and his most talented investment bankers, who came of age in the freewheeling culture of the eighties, he tried to placate both and pleased neither. Hennessey, it now appears, had shrewdly avoided this predicament; he spent more of his time travelling, and cultivating clients and the Swiss bosses, and he ultimately emerged unscathed.

With Cox gone, the situation at First Boston may stabilize. The firm is quick to point out that it has just had a quarter of record earnings—but then nearly every Wall Street firm has had a quarter of record earnings. It's hard to see how First Boston, with a less favorable yield curve than now prevails, with less ebullient equity and debt markets, and with the company bereft of many of its best-known and most experienced investment bankers, can compete over the long term with huge rivals like Morgan Stanley and Goldman Sachs, which already have a strong institutional culture—unless it is simply swallowed by the formidable Crédit Suisse.

The symbol of Wall Street's star system, Bruce Wasserstein, whose departure, in the eyes of many, triggered the turmoil at First Boston, hasn't fared so well, either. Wasserstein Perella had very profitable years in 1988, 1989, and 1990, when First Boston began faltering, but since then it has been hit with numerous departures of its own and seems to be having trouble adapting to the nineties, where profits lie in sales, trading, and underwriting, not mergers and leveraged buyouts. It's not clear whether First Boston would have fared much better had Wasserstein stayed, and the new institutional era may yet claim Wasserstein Perella as a victim.

Bill Reid, now at Morgan Stanley, says he believes all the talk on Wall Street about individuals versus institutions is missing the mark. Echoing the comments of many of the recent defectors, he says, "The tragedy is that any great franchise is built on the loyalty and hard work of its people. When that loyalty is lost or abused, the franchise can't survive. The franchise will suffer, as First Boston is suffering. You can walk around all day saying it's a great name, it's a great franchise. But the fracturing of the culture will ruin any great franchise." In any event, the First Boston that was has already been transformed beyond recognition, as has the Wall Street that spawned it. One indication of this may be the firm's standing on college campuses. Last year, not one member of the Harvard graduating class could be persuaded to come to New York for an interview. ♦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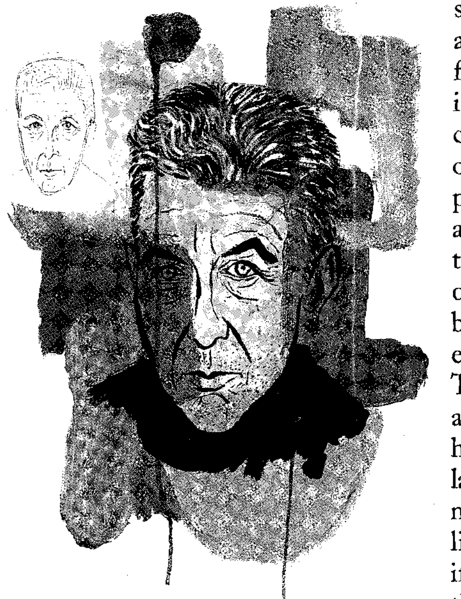
ONWARD AND UPWARD WITH THE ARTS

THE PRINCE OF BUMMERS

Leonard Cohen's songs, featured in an upcoming collection of lyrics, may be fascinated by the fallen, but he has ways of rising above it all.

BY LEON WIESELTIER

SADNESS is a rattlingly common experience, but it is not always one and the same thing. Its banality obscures the fact that it comes in many forms. There is fine sadness and coarse sadness; hard sadness and easy sadness; quickening sadness and stupefying sadness; inherited sadness and acquired sadness; acute sadness and chronic sadness (as William James said there is acute religion and chronic religion); sweet sadness and bitter sadness; comic sadness and tragic sadness; sadness that isolates and sadness that connects; sadness that obscures and sadness that clarifies. The taxonomy is large and it swells with the years.



Only Cohen would rhyme "Hallelujah" with "What's it to ya?"

JOSH GOSFIELD

Sadness may degenerate, of course, into a manner, a hook, an adornment of the art or the person. When it is a pose, though, it is generally a prestigious one: we are the children of a culture for which sadness is evidence of inwardness, for which brooding is a low form—but still a form—of contemplative living. We have been taught that sad means deep. Sometimes it does, sometimes it doesn't. The important point is that it is not merely an emotion. Sadness should also be a source of discipline. In the confessional culture of America, to be sure, sadness is a source of indiscipline, of a lot of noise; and yet, if discriminations can still be made within it, the melancholy din may be tolerated, for it holds some truths. The sad have a duty to speak. Some of the information that they have in their possession may be helpful. Tristesse oblige. The best sadness always has a foundation in reality.

Anyway, happiness is no less frequently a pose. And, measured for its philosophical and practical rewards, the pose of happiness is much less profitable than the pose of sadness. The latter at least errs in the right direction; but the former leaves you with the suspicion that you are being made the fool. Joie de vivre is, in almost all circumstances, an obnoxious standpoint: it denotes a failure of intelligence, a loss of attention, a breakdown of the empirical attitude. This is not merely a matter of lived hardship or the lack of it; even the most painless of lives hears about, if it does not see, the existence of pain. Pessimism runs the risk of despair. Optimism runs the risk of stupidity.

The analytical advantage of melancholy is not all that recommends it. It awards also the advantage of humor. For humor, finally, is armor; it is essentially a technique for the mastery of unhappy circumstances, a way of allaying anxiety about adversity without denying its cause, a fortifying way of being frank about the extent to which the world disappoints. It is in the gap between what we demand of the world and what the world delivers that laughter flourishes. That contradiction is the original occasion of comedy. For this reason, black humor is the purest form of humor, because it transforms the least funny into the most funny without describing it differently. Happy, by contrast, is not funny; the laughter of the happy is usually just an expression of relief, or giddiness, about a state of affairs in which courage is no longer necessary.

Two cheers, in sum, for bummers. I offer this defense of sadness by way of introduction to the praise of Leonard Cohen, poet and singer and (not always, but a lot of the time) prince of bummers, whose ripe and powerful new record, "The Future," was released late last year. For more than two decades Cohen's songs have been admired, not least by the many singers who have covered them (Don Henley slaughtered "Democracy" at the MTV Ball in Washington during the Clinton Inauguration); but admiration of Cohen's work has been always qualified by the suspicion that it is oppressive. Too bleak, too dejected, too sad. "Suzanne takes you down to her place near the river": it sounded a little mystical and a little medicated, and so did many of the small saturnine masterpieces that followed. Cohen has a reputation for a lack of range. It did not help that he began to commit his lugubriousness to record in the sixties, which left many listeners remembering him as an indulgence of their own youth, and associating him with the lugubriousness of adolescence, which *is* a little ridiculous.

But range is a slippery business. When it is wide, it may be too wide, a sign only of virtuosity, of an absence of pressure. Nor is width the only proper measure of range. There is also the measure of depth. Some artists are wide, some artists are deep. There is no denying that Cohen's stylish, self-regarding abjection is present in almost everything he writes and sings. His records are not distinguished by a vastness of feeling. But the feelings that he studies he masters. Cohen does not digress, but he plumbs. And his specificity is a source of his strength: he is one of a tiny visionary company, the handful of rock or blues or folk singers who are still sorting out the sense of the world with which they started. Van Morrison is another such figure, as is Lou Reed, and maybe Al Green. Tim Buckley, who died much too young, should still be counted in this company, and so should Hank Williams. (But not the interminably self-inventing Bob Dylan, who a few years ago recorded a song called "Wiggle Wiggle.") These are all artists with a single insistent problem, or infirmity, or obsession, and therefore with a stubborn tone, of their own. For that reason, they may seem limited, morbid, tiresome—and unmistakable.

Cohen and his company do not satisfy the conventional expectations of artistic development: they are not moving forward, they are circling round and back, reconnoitering the original occasion, strumming and singing asymptotically, trying finally to get the ancient thing right. The scope of their subject matters less than its reality to them. They do not scramble for the new, because they are never through with the old. There is something stout and headstrong about them. They resist the ideal of novelty that is furiously urged upon them by the entertainment business. (Accepting an award in 1988, when "I'm Your Man," his stunning record of that year, sold 1.4 million copies, Cohen improvised an expression of gratitude to CBS Records in which he remarked that "I have always been touched by the modesty of their interest in my work.") Their audiences may not be large, at least by the massified standards of the recording industry; but neither are they faithless. Cohen in particular has an almost pastoral significance for his fans.

There is one sense in which Cohen's range is wide, and that is in the variety of his musical vocabularies. Folk, rock, country, blues, jazz, gospel, the French chanson, the melodramatic figurations of Hadjidakis and Theodorakis, the Jewish minor key—Cohen has a use for all of them. He rifles through the styles, plunders the genres, to find what he needs. His odd musical situation is that he always borrows and never owns. It is a situation that would reduce many musicians to dilettantism or derivativeness. Cohen is saved from such embarrassments by the paradoxical fact that music was not his original calling. He had an identity that preceded his musical one. He came to music from poetry. First he wrote and published words, then he sang and recorded them. Words that appeared in a book in 1961 appeared on a record in 1977; and this was not uncommon. The words started as lyrics and ended as lyrics.

COHEN'S first album, a long and lovely *frisson* called simply "Songs of Leonard Cohen," was made in New York in 1967. Two years later, he told

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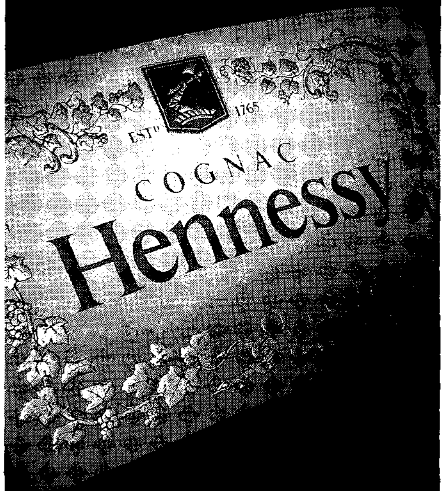

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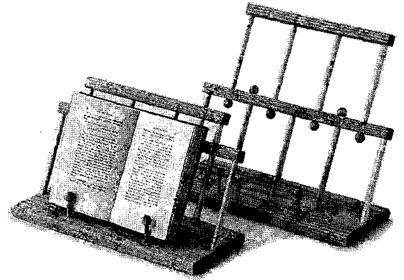

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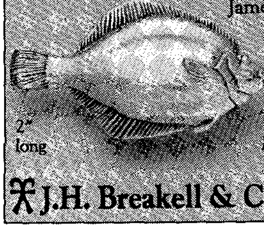

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the New York *Times* that "there is no difference between a poem and a song. Some were songs first and some were poems first, and some were situations. All of my writing has guitars behind it—even the novels." This bardic quality is constant, and it makes up handsomely for the inconstancy of Cohen's musical styles. His songs are knit together by his voice. It is not exactly a singing voice, but a voice reciting, intoning, cantillating, whispering, exclaiming, narrating, ornamenting its words. On his early records Cohen's voice has a straining effect, more reach than grasp, as befits a young man whose dejection has run ahead of his experience. With the passing of the years, however, the voice has deepened into a half-speaking, half-singing bass, a kind of cantus infirmus, that sounds alternately diabolical and wise. (And funny: on his recent cover of Frederick Knight's "Be for Real," Cohen sounds a little like Barry White. The track is slow-dance heaven.)

Cohen started out in the nineteen-fifties, as a writer in the seductive, incompletely modern city of Montreal, "the Jerusalem of the North." He was born there, in 1934, into an affluent and distinguished Jewish family that appears to have admired cultivation as much as success. (In its vitality, the Jewish community of Montreal was the only real rival of the Jewish community of New York.) Cohen became an admirer, and then a friend, of Irving Layton, a Canadian poet who remains bizarrely unknown in this country. Layton, who is now eighty-one years old, is a remarkably prolific and energetic poet and proselytizer for poetry, a sort of grave, classicizing, historically engaged Beat north of the border with a "hot Hebrew heart," who set down the disorder of his life and his time without ever quite thrilling to it.

The most powerful influence on Cohen's words, however, was the dark, un-Jewish, and almost deliriously melodious Lorca, after whom he named his daughter. It was in the Spanish poet that Cohen discovered the force of natural symbols, the mythologization of the self and its states, and the suggestion that pain is properly met by song. ("The moon is dead already/do-re-mi/we're going to bury her now/do-re-fa/in a chalk white rose/do-re-mi/ with a bright glass stalk/do-re-fa.") And there was another model, closer to home, under whose sign, in 1984, Cohen produced a really remarkable book.

That model was the Book of Psalms and that book was the "Book of Mercy," a collection of fifty prose poems that are uncanny in the precision with which they reproduce the cadences and the terribilities, the mixture of lowliness and illumination, of the Psalmist. These poems read weirdly like chapters of Scripture; these verses are *verses*. Chapter Six, for example:

> Sit down, master, on this rude chair of praises, and rule my nervous heart with your great decrees of freedom. Out of time you have taken me to do my daily task. Out of mist and dust you have fashioned me to know the numberless worlds between the crown and the kingdom. In utter defeat I came to you and you received me with a sweetness I had not dared to remember. Tonight I come to you again, soiled by strategies and trapped in the loneliness of my tiny domain. Establish your law in this walled place. Let nine men come to lift me into their prayer so that I may whisper with them: Blessed be the name of the glory of the kingdom forever and forever.

The Psalmist, like his modern Canadian son, is most accurately described not as a poet or as a singer but as a songwriter who sang his own songs. Cohen's appropriation of the Psalmist's form was based on a vivid grasp of its physical and spiritual circumstances. David, remember, composed many of his effusions in flight from Saul; and Cohen saw that the degradations and the exaltations of the Psalmist are the degradations and the exaltations of a man on the run. Psalms is a book in which need is heroic.

There is genuine piety in the "Book of Mercy," a sharp sense of living below what is above, of wishing with ardor to address and to obey. The same emotion informs one of Cohen's most sublime

songs, "If It Be Your Will," a brilliantly simple prayer for the serenity that obedience brings, on his record "Various Positions," of 1984. (The record, which was released in this country by a small label, included a hymn called "Hallelujah," a wryer sort of contemporary psalm with an unforgettable chorus. Only Cohen would rhyme "Hallelujah" with "What's it to ya?") The Psalmist conceived of his songs as offerings; and Cohen writes and performs best when he writes and performs in a somewhat ritual spirit. The discipline in the "Book of Mercy" is found almost nowhere else in his poetry, which sometimes surrenders too swiftly to the poet's moods or to the license that Lorca-like lyricism glibly grants.

IN the fall, Pantheon will publish "Stranger Music," a new collection of Cohen's poems and songs. It is a moving book, the annals of a temperament, the year-by-year, book-by-book record of Cohen's revisitings of his scars, real and imagined. Its melodious insistences are still forceful. Cohen's earlier volumes of poetry are all represented, and their titles alone are enough to send you backward in time: "Let Us Compare Mythologies" and "The Spice-Box of Earth" and—remember when such a juxtaposition shocked?—"Flowers for Hitler." (In Brooklyn, I remember, sometime in the mid-sixties, the exhilaration of such lines as: "When young the Christians told me/how we pinned Jesus/like a lovely butterfly against the wood." Suddenly the old load was lovely.)

Cohen's new book is itself a kind of spice box. In Jewish law, and in the Jewish world in which Cohen grew up, the spice box is blessed and then inhaled after sundown on Saturday evening, in the ceremony that marks the boundary between the Sabbath and the week, between the sacred and the profane. The spice, you might say, is the tradition's opium, except that it is designed to produce the opposite of a hallucination. And the effect of Cohen's verses is rather similar. They inebriate with the aim of temperance. They are a fragrant accompaniment of the slide from the holy to the unholy, perfumed exercises in the art of sinking.

There is a kind of master plot in all of Cohen's writing, and it goes something like this. There is a man. He walks a rainy street at night or inhabits a glamourless rented room. He feels weak and plain and lost, and helpless before all that he remembers. The difference between self-knowledge and self-pity is not clear to him. The world outside is less real to him than the world inside. He is not vain, he is stuck with himself. He has a kind of reverence for his own desires: they are the instruments of his overcomings, which, he knows, are temporary. He has heard about faith, and would like to believe; but the only beings beyond the bridge of his nose of whose existence he is absolutely certain, who have demonstrated a power to unburden him of his sensation of selfhood, to distract him from the knowledge of differentiation which travels with him like his shadow, and thereby to make him happy, are women. (Cohen does not reduce religion to sex. He reduces sex to religion.) In the arms of a woman, he feels luminous. And since he is enchanting in his disenchantment, he is often in a woman's arms. This makes him tender or tawdry or both. Almost as soon as the happiness begins, however, he begins to await its end, and coolly tracks its passing. Often he is betrayed; but he is not bitter. He is grateful. For a while, experience was vivid. For a while, he was lucid.

The surprising thing about Cohen's fascination with fallenness is its stability. Even if he did once write a poem called "Alexander Trocchi, Public Junkie, Priez Pour Nous," Cohen harbors no cheap fantasy of the outlaw, no trite romance of the road. He does not recommend abandon, in the unreconstructed, bohemian way; when he sings about a man overrun by his passions, it is not gladly. The ruined man does not praise ruin. It is one of the central themes of his songs that he wishes to be rescued from disorder, or at least to be vouchsafed the reason for it. There may be little uplift in Cohen, but neither is there an infatuation with meaninglessness. The most affecting song on his new record, and one of the most affecting songs to have been written anywhere in many years, is called "Anthem," and its chorus, behind which a gospel choir is opulently deployed, is "Ring the bells that still can ring. Forget your perfect offering. There is a crack in everything. That's how the light gets in." On the page, the words seem a tiny

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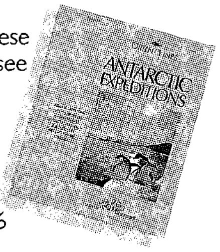
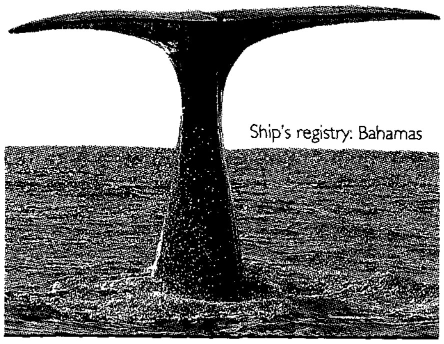
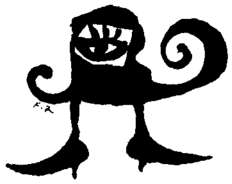




bit trite. On the record, they are the sound of grown-up solace, of spiritualized patience, of quotidian valor.

QUOTIDIAN valor is also the impression that the man himself makes. An austere and attractive silence surrounds his person, an unexpected decorum. Cohen is a thoughtful man of sturdy build, with a face that seems at war with its own weariness. His eyes, now approaching, now receding, give the measure of his detachment from his surroundings. His graying hair is closely cropped, severe but slightly more forgiving than the shaved head with which he appeared on the cover of his live album recorded in 1970, when he became a young adept of Rinzai Buddhism. He wears elegant clothes in dark colors, which on him look like the dandified vestments of an imaginary order. (He did invent something that he calls the Order of the Unified Heart, into which you are inducted by the award of an odd and handsome lapel pin that shows two hearts locked together in the manner of the Star of David. He drew the symbol for the cover of the "Book of Mercy." "Here's what you need to know," he tells you as he places the ornament in your hand. "There are no meetings, no by-laws, and no dues, and if you lose the pin, you get another." Naturally, you join. There follows a wicked smile, as if to acknowledge his awareness that this is one of the few instances of human association that make it this easy.)

His surroundings, too, are rather unexpected. Aegean bourgeois, they might be called. Cohen lives in a modest two-story house in Los Angeles, on a street of lawns strewn with morning papers, within striking distance of the tony grotesqueries of Sunset but closer to Fairfax, the old Jewish neighborhood, where he swims daily. Downstairs are an office and an empty room with a serious set of weights. Upstairs are his quarters, which are sparse. They are painted and furnished in extreme white, except for a few distressed wooden tables; and it does not take long to figure out that this white is the sun- and sea-struck white of Hydra, the Greek island where Cohen lived for most of the sixties and found his timbre. There are fruits and flowers and a menorah sitting on the wood; the place has an artisanal mood, and leaves you with a strong feeling for the integrity of its objects. It is neat in the way that rustic dwellings are neat. A house of perishables will not survive a mess.



The simplicity disappears from this house of perishables only in Cohen's workroom, which is outfitted with state-of-the-art synthesizers and fax machines and the sort of computer that allows him to write music and to paint portraits on the screen. Here the songs are composed and arranged; and composed again and arranged again. Watching Cohen work, you see that he is himself the best policer of his own platitudes. He is suspicious of his own signature. ("O draw me out of an easy skill," he wrote in the "Book of Mercy.") The track on a demo that you admire because it is a quintessential Cohen song *he does not admire for the same reason.* His new record includes a song, called "Closing Time," that began life as a catchy up-tempo ballad and arrived in the record stores as a catchy demonic square dance. Cohen has always been mad for arranging. His first record, the one that is remembered as a milestone of sixties folk, was hardly an affair of a man and a guitar; and, in 1977, he placed himself in the hands of Phil Spector for a weirdly powerful record called "Death of a Ladies' Man," in which Spector inflicted his bombast on some of Cohen's finest songs. (At the time, it sounded to many like a huge mistake. It was not: Spector's grandiloquence turned out to be monstrously witty.)

The synthesizer is a dangerous instrument: an invitation to hyperbole, a means of instant musical gratification. But Cohen at his keyboard is like a potter or a cobbler; the artisanal atmosphere of the house survives its spanking technology. Cohen scores, and re-scores, and doodles, and starts again, and writes parts in and writes parts out, and worries over a different rhythm, and searches stubbornly for the setting in which a riff (like the "fiddles" that became the occasion for "Closing Time") will best live. A song that seems finished in the evening will be trashed in the morning. And what the synthesizer fails to provide, the studio will: on the new record there is a hilarious bump-and-grind version of Irving Berlin's "Always," which was the achievement of a studio band that one evening hit the jackpot.

YOU cannot really grasp the lovely gravity of the man except on Mt. Baldy. There, about an hour's drive northeast of Los Angeles, in the direction of Claremont, is an old Boy Scout camp that has been transformed into a Buddhist monastery, in which Cohen is a kind of adjunct elder. We set out for Mt. Baldy before dawn one April morning. The ungodly hour turned out to be rather a godly one. The mountains were covered with hoary, gigantic pines, which were finished in snow. We had left gold for white, and were a universe away from Melrose and Malibu. The climb in the car brought us into a freezing, virgin weather.

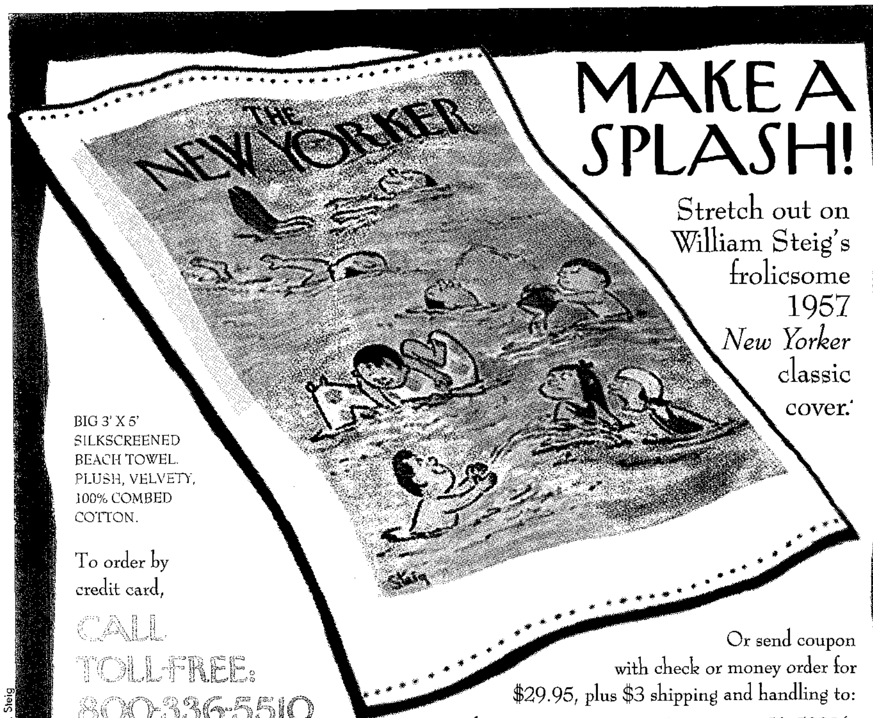
We parked off the road, and Cohen abruptly excused himself; in minutes he exchanged his record-company bomber jacket and rakish newsboy cap, which made him look appealingly like Dion, for a long cassock tied at the waist, from which his feet dropped into old slippers. I was a little astounded: he looked exactly like himself. Leonard Koan. He trod up the snowy path and greeted a monk similarly robed, and the two of them looked to me like a couple of Jewish men outside a synagogue speaking happy, worldly trivialities prior to a great rabbi's sermon. I felt a little guilty about my instant translation of this unfamiliar scene into a familiar idiom; but I later learned that Cohen refers to the Buddhist temple he attends, in deepest, darkest Los Angeles, as "the shul."

More important, there *was* a great rabbi who *was* about to give a great sermon, which was what we, along with perhaps two dozen other people, had come to hear. The rabbi was a *roshi*, or teacher, whom Cohen called simply Roshi, and to whom he is utterly devoted; and the sermon was a ritual disquisition called a *teisho*. Roshi's given name, I later learned, was Joshu Sasaki, and he was a distinguished teacher who had come to California from Japan in 1962. According to "How the Swans Came to the Lake," Rick Fields' wonderful study of Buddhism in America, Joshu Sasaki was then—and still is—a short, round man with a pugnacious nature and a full belly-deep laugh. He arrived in Los Angeles with a Bible in one sleeve of his robe and an English dictionary in the other. He must have looked at the Bible because he has been especially active in teaching zazen at Catholic

> monasteries, but he soon decided that he was too old—or busy—to do much about learning English, and he still . . . delivers his teisho in Japanese—a Japanese that is, according to his present translator, Shinzen Young, immensely difficult to translate. . . . Sasaki-roshi used traditional koans in an untraditional way—or to be more precise, he transformed traditional koans into the American idiom, "How do you realize Buddha nature while driving a car?" for example. . . . He recommended standing up and laughing out loud, from the belly, first thing in the morning, and once, when he was asked why he came to America he replied, "I let other people do the teaching. I came to have a good time. I want Americans to learn how to truly laugh."

It is worth noting that "How do you realize Buddha nature while driving a car?" is not all that different from "What's it to ya? . . . Hallelujah!" And Cohen in Roshi's company at the Buddhist monastery was like a fish in water, or like a non-fish in non-water, or like neither a fish in water nor a non-fish in non-water; but he was certainly concentrated and glad. Some gracious monks, a man and a woman, gave us some rough tea, and we proceeded to the *teisho.* I sat, a little awkwardly, like a fine, urban, decently alienated, not altogether unreconstructed Jew, on a chair; and everybody else sat on cushions, "in position," legs impossibly crossed, necks stiffly up, hands joined and thumbs resolutely laid together, eyes closed. Roshi began his discourse. Shinzen Young translated swiftly and with great authority: not Self, not not-Self . . . And then, I confess, my attention was distracted by the sight of Cohen. He was seated in a transport of fixity.

Some of the monks hung on Roshi's every word, some of them nodded off unnuminously. He of the famous blue raincoat sat in the humble black robe and made his temporary, but regular, escape. After the *teisho* we had more rough tea, this time with Roshi, who was indeed part imp and part saint, and very jolly. We walked back out into the spring snow. Cohen returned to his distinguished leather jacket. At the first tavern at the foot of the mountain we had cheeseburgers for breakfast. Happy is the unhappy man, I kept thinking. Some weeks later, there was a terrible earthquake in Los Angeles, and I called Cohen to establish that he was all right. It turned out that he had been meditating in "the shul" when the tremors struck. "It was beautiful, man," he exulted. "Nobody broke position." ♦



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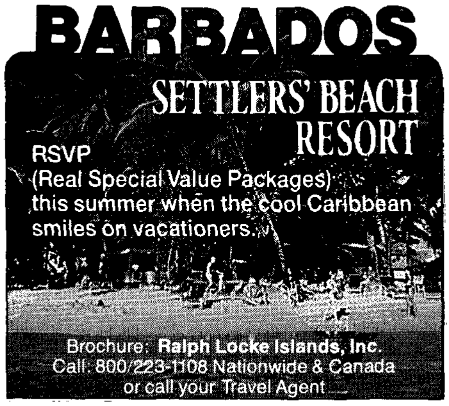

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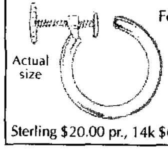

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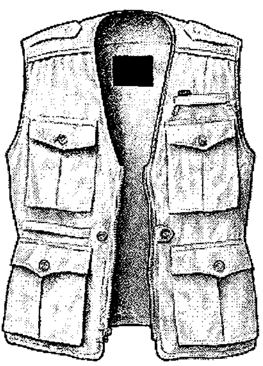

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LETTER FROM CALIFORNIA

TROUBLE IN LAKEWOOD

Lakewood was once the ideal postwar town, part of the high-stakes defense boom that made California rich. Now it is best known as the home of the Spur Posse, a gang of high-school athletes who counted their sexual conquests as "points" in what may be the only game left in town.

BY JOAN DIDION

LAKEWOOD, CALIFORNIA, the Los Angeles County community where an amorphous high-school clique identifying itself as the Spur Posse recently achieved a short-lived national notoriety, lies between the Long Beach and San Gabriel freeways and east of the San Diego, part of that vast grid familiar to the casual visitor mainly from the air, Southern California's industrial underbelly, the thousand square miles of aerospace and oil that powered the place's apparently endless expansion. Like much of the southern end of this grid, Lakewood was until after the Second World War open farmland, several thousand acres of beans and sugar beets just inland from the Signal Hill oil field and across the road from the plant that the federal government completed in 1941 for Donald Douglas at the Long Beach airport. This Douglas plant, with the outsize American flag whipping in the wind and the huge forward-slanted letters "MCDONNELL DOUGLAS" wrapped around the building and the MD-11s parked like cars off Lakewood Boulevard, remains the single most noticeable feature on the local horizon, but for a while, some years back, there was another: the hundred-foot pylon, its rotating beacon visible for several miles, that advertised the opening, in April of 1950, of what was meant to be the world's biggest subdivision, a tract larger in conception than the original Long Island Levittown, seventeen thousand five hundred houses waiting to be built on the thirty-four hundred dead-level acres that three California developers, Mark Taper, Ben Weingart, and Louis Boyar, had bought for eight million eight hundred thousand dollars from the Montana Land Company.

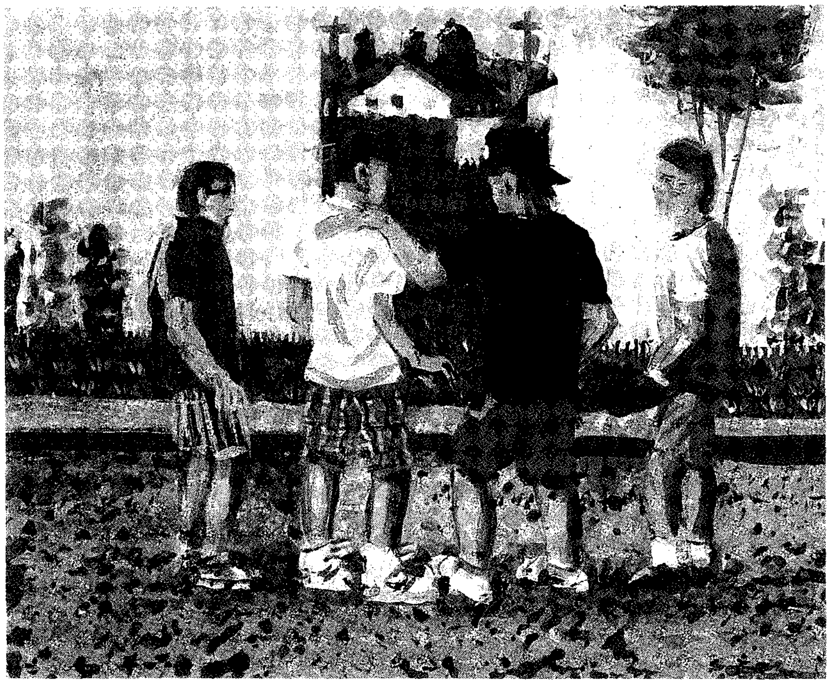
"Lakewood," the sign still reads at the point on Lakewood Boulevard where Bellflower becomes Lakewood. "Tomorrow's City Today." What was being offered in tomorrow's city, as in most subdivisions of the period, was a raw lot and the promise of a house. Each of the seventeen thousand five hundred houses would be nine hundred and fifty to eleven hundred square feet on a fifty-by-hundred-foot lot. Each would be a one-story stucco (seven floor plans, twenty-one different exteriors, no identical models to be built next to or facing each other) painted in one of thirty-nine color schemes. Each would have two or three bedrooms, oak floors, a glass-enclosed shower, a stainless-steel double sink, and a garbage-disposal unit. Each would sell for between eight and ten thousand dollars, Low F.H.A., Vets No Down. There were to be thirty-seven playgrounds, twenty schools. There were to be seventeen churches. There were to be a hundred and thirty-three miles of street, paved with an inch and a half of No. 2 macadam on an aggregate base.

There was to be—and this was key not only to the project but to the nature of the community that eventually evolved—a regional shopping center, Lakewood Center, which in turn was conceived as America's largest retail complex: two hundred and fifty-six acres, with parking for ten thousand cars, anchored by a May Company. "Lou Boyar pointed out that they would build a shopping center and around that a city, that he would make a city for us and millions for himself," John Todd, a resident of the area since 1949 and Lakewood's city attorney, later wrote. "Everything about this entire project was perfect," Mark Taper said in 1969, when he sat down with city officials to work up a local history. "Things happened that may never happen again."

What he meant, of course, was the perfect synergy of time and place, the seamless confluence of the Second World War and the Korean War and the G.I. Bill and the defense contracts that began to flood Southern California as the Cold War set in. Here on this raw acreage on the floodplain between the Los Angeles and San Gabriel Rivers was where two powerfully conceived national interests, that of keeping the economic engine running and that of creating an enlarged middle class, could be seen to converge. What happened at the site of the hundred-foot pylon in the spring of 1950 was Cimarron: thirty thousand people showed up for the first day of selling. Twenty thousand showed up on weekends throughout the spring. Near the sales office was a nursery where children could be left while parents toured the initial seven completed and furnished model houses. Thirty-six salesmen worked day and evening shifts, showing potential buyers how their G.I. benefits, no down payment, and thirty years of monthly payments ranging from forty-three to fifty-four dollars could elevate them to ownership of a piece of the future. Deals were closed on six hundred and eleven houses the first week. One week saw five hundred and sixty-seven starts. A new foundation was excavated every fifteen minutes. Cement trucks were lined up for a mile, waiting to move down the new blocks pouring foundations. Shingles were fed to roofers by conveyor belt. And, at the very point when sales had begun to slow, as Taper observed at the 1969 meeting with city officials, "the Korean War was like a new stimulation."

"There was this new city growing—growing like leaves," one of the original residents, who, with her husband, had opened a delicatessen in Lakewood Center, recalled for an oral-history project undertaken in 1969 by the city and Lakewood High School. "So we decided this is where we should start. . . .

There were young people, young children, schools, a young government that was just starting out. We felt all the big stores were coming in. May Company and all the other places started opening. So we rented one of the stores and we were in business." These Second World War and Korean War veterans and their wives who started out in Lakewood were, typically, about thirty years old. They were, typically, not from California but from the Midwest and the border South. They were, typically, blue-collar and lower-level white-collar. They had 1.7 children, they had steady jobs. Their experience had tended to reinforce the conviction that social and economic mobility worked exclusively upward. "Naïvely, you could say that Lakewood was the American Dream made affordable for a generation of industrial workers who in the preceding generation could never aspire to that kind of ownership," Donald Waldie, the City of Lakewood's public-information officer, said one morning recently when I visited him at City Hall. "They were fairly but not entirely homogeneous in their ethnic background. They were oriented to aerospace. They worked for Hughes, they worked for Douglas, they worked at the naval station and shipyard in Long Beach. They worked, in other words, at all the places that exemplified the bright future that California was supposed to be."



GARY PANTER

Donald Waldie grew up in Lakewood, and, after Cal State Long Beach and graduate work at the University of California at Irvine, chose to remain, as have a striking number of people who now live there. In a county increasingly populated by low-income Mexican and Central American and Asian immigrants and pressed by the continuing needs of its low-income blacks, 59,724 of Lakewood's 73,557 citizens, according to the 1990 census, are white. More than half of Lakewood's residents were born in California, and nearly half of the rest in the Midwest and the South. The largest number of those employed work, just as their fathers and grandfathers did, either directly or via subcontractors and venders, for Douglas or Hughes or Rockwell or at the Long Beach naval station and shipyard.

People who live in Lakewood do not necessarily think of themselves as living in Los Angeles, and can often list the occasions on which they have visited there, most frequently to see the Dodgers play or to show a visiting relative the Music Center. Their experience with the entertainment industry stops at the multiplex. Their experience with the city's woes is equally remote: the number of homeless people in Lakewood either in shelters or "visible in street," according to the 1990 census, was zero. When residents of Lakewood speak about the rioting that began in Los Angeles on April 29, 1992, the date of the first Rodney King verdicts, they are talking about events that seem to them, despite the significant incidence of arson and looting in such neighboring communities as Long Beach and Compton, to have happened somewhere else. The subject of last year's riot, and of a possible recurrence, came up one afternoon when I was talking to Susie Hipp and Sharon Jones, two local mothers (this is a community in which many women define themselves as "mothers" or "moms") who had organized a Celebrate Lakewood movement to counter the negative image the Spur Posse had given to Lakewood High School. "We're far away from that element," Sharon Jones said. "If you've driven around—"

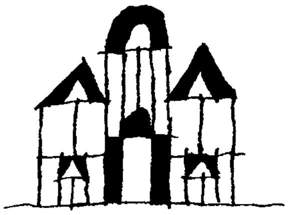
"Little suburbia," Susie Hipp said.

"America U.S.A., right here," Sharon Jones said.

Susie Hipp's husband works at a nearby Rockwell plant, not the Rockwell plant in Lakewood. The Rockwell plant in Lakewood closed last year, a thousand jobs gone. The scheduled 1996 closing of the Long Beach naval station will mean almost nine thousand jobs gone. On June 25th, the federal Base Closure and Realignment Commission granted a provisional stay to the Long Beach naval shipyard, which adjoins the naval station and employs four thousand people, but its prospects for the long term remain dim. One thing that is not remote to Lakewood, one thing so close that not many people want even to talk about it, is the apprehension that what has already happened to the Rockwell plant and what will happen to the Long Beach naval base and what will probably eventually happen to the Long Beach naval shipyard could also happen to the Douglas plant. "There's a tremendous fear that at some point this operation might go away entirely," Carl Cohn, the superintendent of the Long Beach Unified School District, which includes Lakewood High School, told me. "I mean, that's kind of one of the whispered things around town. Nobody wants it out there."

Douglas has already moved part of its MD-80 production to Salt Lake City. Douglas has already moved part of what remains of its C-17 production to St. Louis. Douglas has already moved the T-45 to St. Louis. The Commission on State Finance, which monitors economic conditions for the state, in a 1992 study called "Impact of Defense Cuts on California" estimated nineteen thousand layoffs still to come from Hughes and McDonnell Douglas, but there had already been, in Southern California, some twenty-one thousand McDonnell Douglas layoffs. According to a June report on aerospace unemployment prepared by researchers in the U.C.L.A. School of Architecture and Urban Planning, half the California aerospace workers laid off in 1989 were still unemployed or had left the state two years later. Most of those who did find jobs ended up in lower-income service jobs; only seventeen per cent went back to work in the aerospace industry at close to their original salaries. Of those laid off in 1991 and 1992, only sixteen per cent, a year later, had jobs of any kind.

It is this Douglas plant on the Lakewood city line, the one with the flag whipping in the wind and the logo wrapped around the building, that has so far taken the hit for almost eighteen thousand of McDonnell Douglas's twenty-one thousand layoffs. "I've got two kids, a first and a third grader," Carl Cohn told me. "When you take your kid to a birthday party and your wife starts talking about So-and-So's father just being laid off—there are all kinds of implications, including what's going to be spent on a kid's birthday party. These concrete things really come home to you. And you realize, yeah, this bad economic situation is very real." The message on the marquee at Rochelle's Restaurant and Motel and Convention Center, between Douglas and the Long Beach airport, still reads "WELCOME DOUGLAS HAPPY HOUR 4-7," but the place is nailed shut, a door banging in the wind. "We've developed good citizens," Mark Taper said in 1969. "Enthusiastic owners of property. Owners of a piece of their country—a stake in the land." This was a sturdy but finally an unsupportable ambition, sustained for forty years by good times and the good will of the federal government.



WHEN people in Lakewood spoke about what they called "Spur," or "the situation at the high school," some meant the series of allegations that led to the March arrests—with requests that charges be brought on ten counts of rape by intimidation, four counts of unlawful sexual intercourse, one count of forcible rape, one count of oral copulation, and one count of lewd conduct with a minor under the age of fourteen—of nine current or former Lakewood High students who either happened to be or were believed to be members of the informal fraternity known locally as the Spur Posse. Others meant not the allegations, which they saw either as outright invention or as representations of events open to interpretation (this was the spring that the phrase "consensual sex" entered the local vocabulary), but rather the national attention that followed those allegations, the invasion of what they called "you people," or "you folks," or "the media," and the appearance, on "Jenny Jones" and "Jane Whitney" and "Maury Povich" and "Nightline" and "Montel Williams" and "Dateline" and "Donahue" and "The Home Show," of two hostile arrangements of hormones, otherwise known as "the boys" and "the girls."

Whether the speaker saw "the boys" as the immediate problem or "the girls" as the immediate problem or "you people" as the immediate problem, there existed a consensus on the nature of the context in which the problem had occurred: the problem had occurred in what was uniformly described as "a middle-class community," or even "an upper-middle-class community." "We're an upper-middle-class community," I was told one morning outside the Los Padrinos Juvenile Court, in Downey, where a group of Lakewood women was protesting the decision of the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office not to bring most of the so-called sex charges requested by the sheriff's department. "It's a very hush-hush community, very low profile, they don't want to make waves, don't want to step on anybody's toes." "IT WASN'T THE BLOODS, CRIPS, LONGOS"—the Longos are a Long Beach gang—"IT WAS THE SPURS," the hand-lettered signs read that morning, and "WHAT IF ONE OF THE VICTIMS HAD BEEN YOUR GRANDDAUGHTER, HUH, MR. DISTRICT ATTORNEY?" Donald Waldie, when he is not at City Hall, has been working on a connected series of narratives about someone who works at City Hall in a place like Lakewood, one of which appeared in the Fall, 1992, *Kenyon Review*. "He knew his city's first 17,000 houses had been built within three years," this story reads in part. "He was aware of what this must have cost, but he did not care.

"The houses still worked.

"He thought of them as middle class even after he learned that 1,100-square-foot tract houses on streets meeting at right angles were not middle class at all, that middle-class houses were the homes of people who would not live here."

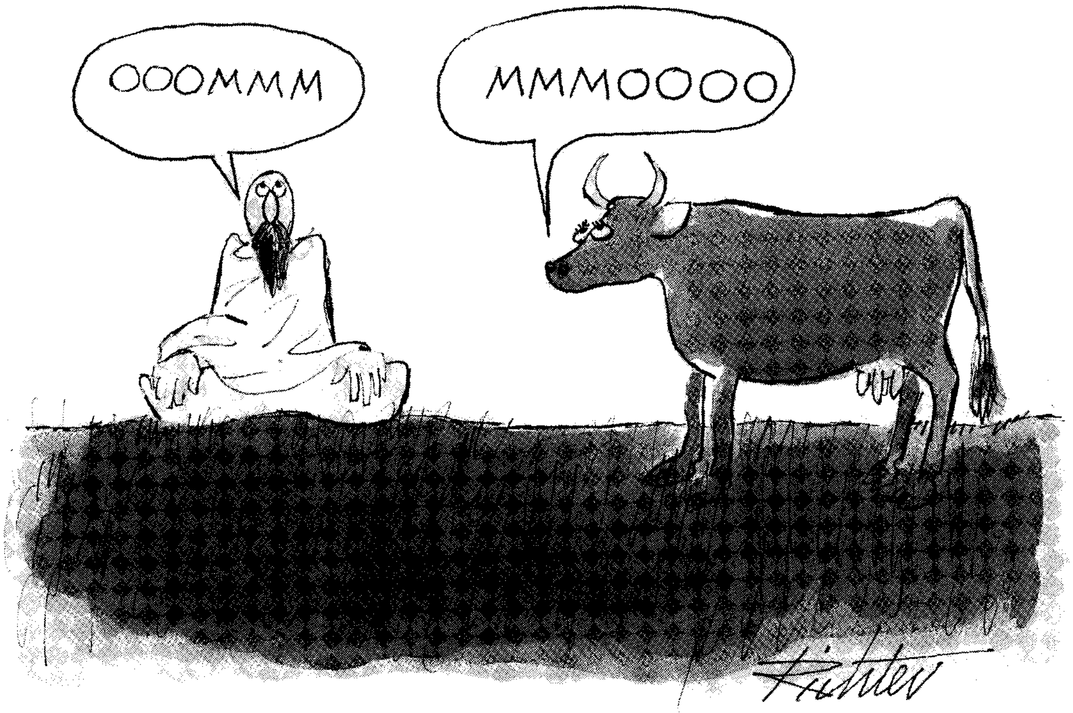
THIS is in fact the tacit dissonance at the center of every moment in Lakewood, which is why the average day there raises, for the visitor, so many and such vertiginous questions: What had it cost to create and maintain an artificial ownership class? Who paid? Who benefitted? What happens when that class stops being useful? What does it mean to drop back below the line? What does it cost to hang on above it, how do you behave, what do you say, what are the pitons you drive into the granite? One of the ugliest and most revelatory of the many ugly and revelatory moments that characterized the television appearances of Spur Posse members this spring occurred on "Jane Whitney," when a nineteen-year-old Lakewood High graduate named Chris Albert ("Boasts He Has 44 'Points' for Having Sex with Girls") turned mean with a member of the audience, a young black woman who had tried to suggest that the Spurs on view were not exhibiting what she considered native intelligence.

"I *don't* get— I *don't* understand what she's saying," Chris Albert at first said, letting his jaw go slack, as these boys tended to do when confronted with an unwelcome, or in fact any, idea.

Another Spur interpreted: "We're dumb. She's saying we're dumb."

"What education does she have?" Chris Albert then snarled, and tensed against his chair, as if trying to shake himself alert. "Where do you work at? McDonald's? Burger King?" A third Spur tried to interrupt, but Chris Albert, once roused, could not be deflected: "$5.25? $5.50?" And then there it was, the piton, driven in this case into not granite but shale: "*I go to college.*"

FOR a while this spring, they seemed to be there every time we turned on a television set, these blank-faced



Lakewood girls, these feral Lakewood boys. There were the dead eyes, the thick necks, the jaws that closed only to chew gum. There was the refusal or inability to process the simplest statement without rephrasing it. There was the fuzzy relationship to language, the tendency to seize on a drifting fragment of something once heard and repeat it, not quite get it right, worry it like a bone. The news that some schools distributed condoms had apparently been seized in mid-drift, and was frequently offered as an extenuating circumstance, the fact that Lakewood High School had never distributed condoms notwithstanding. "The schools, they're handing out condoms and stuff like that, and, like, if they're handing out condoms, why don't they tell us you can be arrested for it?" one Spur asked Gary Collins and Sarah Purcell on "The Home Show." "They pass out condoms, teach sex education and pregnancy-this, pregnancy-that, but they don't teach us any rules," another told Jane Gross, of the New York *Times*.

"Schools hand out condoms, teach safe sex," the mother of a Spur complained on "The Home Show." "It's the society, they have these clinics, they have abortions, they don't have to tell their parents, the schools give out condoms, jeez, what does that tell you?" the father of one Lakewood boy, a sixteen-year-old who had just admitted to a juvenile-court petition charging him with lewd conduct with a ten-year-old girl, asked a television interviewer. "I think people are blowing this thing way out of proportion," David Ferrell, of the Los Angeles *Times*, was told by one Spur. "It's all been blown out of proportion as far as I'm concerned," he was told by another. "Of course, there were several other sex scandals at the time, so this perfectly normal story got blown out of proportion," I was told by a Spur parent. "People, you know, kind of blow it all out of proportion," a Spur advised viewers of "Jane Whitney." "They blow it out of proportion a lot," another said on the same show. A Spur girlfriend, Jodi, offered her opinion by telephone: "I think it's been blown way out of proportion, like way out of proportion."

All these speakers seemed to be referring to a cultural misery apprehended only recently, and then dimly. Those who mentioned "blowing it out of proportion" were complaining specifically about "the media," and its "power," but more generally about a sense of being besieged, set upon, at the mercy of forces beyond local control. "The whole society has changed," one Spur parent told me. "Morals have changed. Girls have changed. It used to be, girls would be more or less the ones in control. Girls would hold out, girls would want to be married at eighteen or nineteen and they'd keep their sights on having a home and love and a family."

Part of what made such conversations seem slightly inchoate at their center was a kind of disconnect: there was an insistence that "Lakewood," the story, was the result of a society gone awry, and that this warp or perversion was new in the world. Yet the story, as told, was not new at all: nothing the girls and the boys were saying about one another could have surprised anyone who ever passed through a big public high school. The language was the common stuff of high-school sexual skirmishing, the novel element being that this particular skirmishing was taking place on national television. The girls said they had been raped, intimidated, "used." The boys said the girls "wanted it." "Like, you know, for example, I can remember one night, you know, a girl was home by herself, eight of my friends went over and each of them took their turn. And she—you know, she wanted it." The girls said the boys were keeping score, calling them "points." The boys said, "Everybody in life knows how many sex partners they've had and it's just a nicer way of putting it." The girls said they had been victimized, "ruined." The boys said, "We're a bunch of guys that are— I mean, better than decent-looking. We don't have to go out raping girls. That's not us, you know."

All the dismal proprieties of being in high school seemed to be on rewind here. There was among both the boys and the girls an abhorrence of female sexuality, a shared willingness to define the act of sex as either forced or a bargaining chip, to divide girls into "good" and "bad" on the basis of whether they "held out." "Why would a girl sleep with a guy on the first date," a Spur asked rhetorically on "Maury Povich," and in due time he provided the answer: "They're whores." Another said, "If a girl sleeps with a guy on the first night, that's not somebody that you can respect." A third, in response to a question about how these Spurs would want their sisters treated, said that his sister was "probably one of the only virgins left in the whole city," and "she'll stay that way." Sex was, in this view, an essentially commercial transaction, the transfer of a commodity with depreciable value. One Lakewood mother, on "The Home Show," reported telling her daughter that "she is her most precious gift," the same dispiriting assessment of the female condition I heard in the gym at C. K. McClatchy High School in Sacramento in perhaps 1952. She had told her daughter, she said, "not to let anybody take it, and not to give it away like it's something to get rid of." A caller on "Jane Whitney" echoed this, once again explaining the difference between "good" and "bad" girls: "A good girl is the one who waits and is with a guy and sees if the guy wants just one thing from her or if the guy loves her."

"He cornered me and he tried to kiss me, then he started taking off my pants," a sweet-faced seventeen-year-old told us, first on "20/20" and then on "Montel Williams." "He did his business and stood up, began to walk away. And I sat there crying, scrounging for my pants, and he says, 'Don't say you didn't want to' and he walked away." "They were downright crude," a girl in a wig and dark glasses told us on "Donahue." "They did not want to date me. They did not want to get to know me. . . . They went out of their way to touch me. They went out of their way to bump me. . . . Physically run into me. Grab me." "It's always, you know, we're the sluts, but they're the big studs," a sixteen-year-old told us on "20/20." "I felt used. . . . I don't have any respect for myself. I have no self-esteem left in me at all."

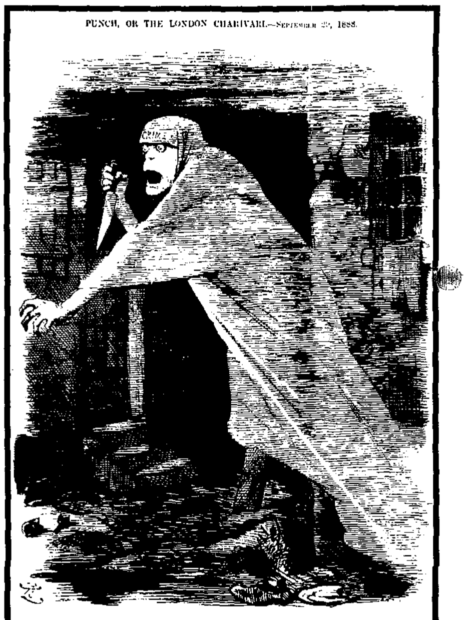
"Self-esteem" was a frequently mentioned deficit, at least among the girls, all of whom either claimed to be or were said to be lacking it. The boys seemed to have heard about self-esteem, most recently at the "ethics" assemblies (date rape, when no means no) the school had hastily organized after the arrests, but, hey, no problem. "I'm definitely comfortable with myself and my self-esteem," one said on "Dateline." "Yeah, why wouldn't I? I mean, what's not to like about me?" another said when asked on "Maury Povich" if he liked himself. "A lot of girls find us attractive, star athletes," the boys said. And: "The good-looking girls that are around our age would definitely be with us, because maybe some pie-in-the-sky dream, they could get a commitment. . . . Maybe they could win the lottery, too." And: "I don't consider myself a normal person, you know. I think I'm a step above everyone else." And: "We go out, all of us go out to parties or go out to a club or whatever, we come home at like two in the morning, call a girl, and, you know, if she wants us to come over, we'll come over." And: "There's the girls that, you know, that you have respect for and that you'll romance, you know, you'll take them out and it's like the romance scene, it's not like, you know—and then there's these other girls, you know, you're going to drive over there, you already know what's going to happen, you know, it's no romance, you know, it's just—wham. You know, three and out."

Most adults to whom I spoke in Lakewood shared a sense that something in town had gone wrong. Many connected this apprehension to the Spur Posse, or at any rate to certain Spur Posse members who had emerged, even before the arrests and for a variety of reasons, as the community's most visible males. Almost everyone agreed that this was a town in which what had been considered the definition of good parenting—the encouragement of assertive behavior among male children—had for some reason got badly out of hand. What many people disagreed about was whether sex was at the center of this problem, and some people felt troubled and misrepresented by the fact that public discussion of the situation in Lakewood had tended to focus exclusively on what they called "the sex charges," or "the sexual charges." "People have to understand," I was told by one plaintive mother. "This isn't about the sexual charges." Some believed the charges intrinsically unprovable. Others seemed simply to regard sex among teen-agers as a combat zone with its own rules, a contained conflict from which they were prepared, as the District Attorney was, to look away. Many seemed unaware of the extent to which the question of gender had come to occupy the nation's official attention, and so had failed to appreciate the ease with which the events in Lakewood could feed into a discussion already in progress, offer a fresh context in which to recap Tailhook, Packwood, Anita Hill.

This was not exactly what was going

ARTIST'S NOTEBOOK
BY RICHARD MERKIN

PUNCH, OR THE LONDON CHARIVARI.—September 29, 1888.

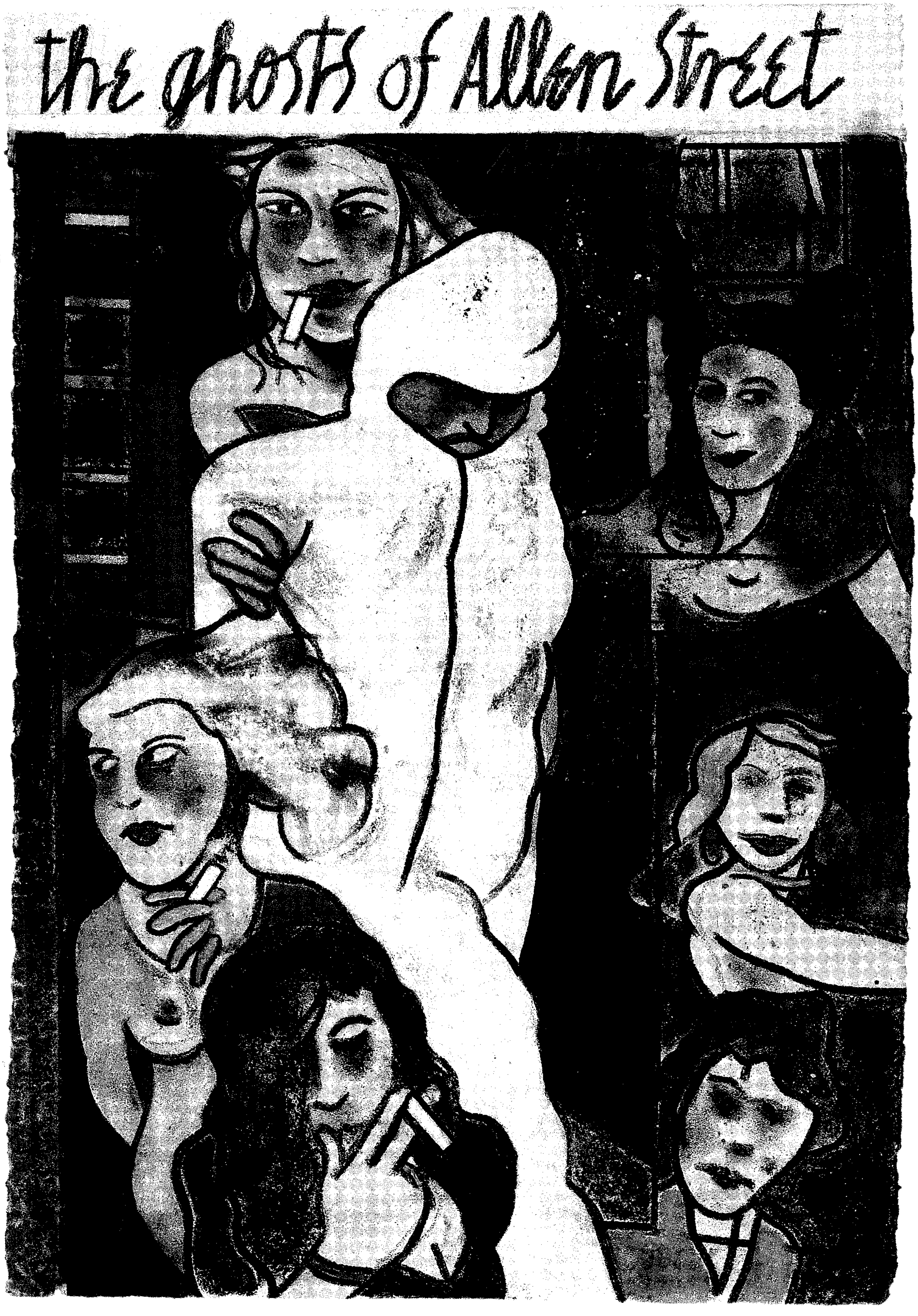


THE NEMESIS OF NEGLECT.

I reacted to the recent front-page pictures of Joel Rifkin, the accused serial murderer who frequented the prostitutes of Allen Street, with a sense of both alarm and déjà vu. It wasn't just that in that dishevelled jumpsuit, and without his spectacles, he looked like the world's worst-equipped astronaut. No, what disturbed me was that Rifkin reminded me of nothing so much as a bizarre figure from a *Punch* cartoon at the time of the Jack the Ripper murders. The drawing, published in 1888, depicts a hideous wraith brandishing a large carving knife and framed in an entranceway not unlike that shown in a photograph on the front page of the *Times*. Beneath the cartoon is a rhyme that ends:

Red-handed, ruthless, furtive, unerect,
'tis murderous crime—the nemesis of neglect!

What may seem mere coincidence to others is profound parallel to the artist—at least, to this artist. I saw the photograph as doppelgänger, and I didn't mind borrowing components of the *Punch* cartoon, either. I took the barred window in the upper right from the cartoon, and the head of the woman in the bottom right was taken from a photograph of an alleyway outside a Spitalfields doss-house. The woman's face is one that has haunted me for as long as I can remember, and it seemed appropriate to my scenario. ♦



the ghosts of Allen Street

on in Lakewood. What happened this spring had begun, most people agreed, at least a year before, maybe more. There had been incidents, occurrences that could not be reconciled with the community's preferred view of itself. There had been burglaries, credit cards and jewelry missing from the bedroom drawers of houses where local girls were babysitting. There had been assaults in local parks, bicycles stolen and sold. There had even been, beginning in the summer of 1992, felony arrests: Dana Belman, who is generally said to have "founded" the Spur Posse, was arrested on suspicion of stealing nineteen guns from the bedroom of a house where he was said to have attended a party. Not long before that, in Las Vegas, Dana Belman and another Spur, Christopher Russo, had been detained for possession of stolen credit cards. Just before Christmas of 1992, Dana Belman and Christopher Russo were detained yet again, and arrested for alleged check forgery.

Much of what got talked about was, for a while, less actionable than plain troubling. Young children in Lakewood had come to know among themselves whom to avoid in those thirty-seven playgrounds, what cars to watch for on those hundred and thirty-three miles of No. 2 macadam. There had been threats, bullying tactics, the systematic harassment of girls or younger children who made complaints or "stood up to" or in any way resisted the whim of a certain group of boys. "I'm talking about throughout the community," Karin Polacheck, who represents Lakewood on the board of education for the Long Beach Unified School District, told me. "At the baseball fields, at the parks, at the markets, on the corners of school grounds. They were organized enough that young children would say, 'Watch out for that car when it comes around,' 'Watch out for these boys.' I've heard stories of walking up and stealing baseball bats and telling kids, 'If you tell anyone, I'll beat your head in.' . . . I'm talking about young children, nine, ten years old. You know, it's a small community. . . . Younger kids knew that these older kids were out there."

"You're dead," the older boys would reportedly say, or "You're gonna get fucked up," "You're gonna get it," "You're gonna die." "I don't like who she's hanging with, why don't we just kill her now." There was a particular form of street terror mentioned by many people: invasive vehicular maneuvers construed by the targets as attempts to "run people down." "There were skid marks outside my house," one mother told me. "They were trying to scare my daughter. Her life was hell. She had chili-cheese nachos thrown at her at school." "They just like to intimidate people," I was repeatedly told. "They stare back at you. They don't go to school, they ditch. They ditch and then they beg the teacher to pass them, because they have to have a C average to play on the teams." One young woman

PROTEUS

At midday he rose on schedule from the flood
to stretch his limbs on the kelp-strewn shelf
of rock, where he could soak his bones
in the drippings of the sun
and watch, bemused, the monsters of the deep,
who were his sacred charge,
humping and snorting at their brutish games.

He was not envious of their rampant blood,
nor had he bargained for this keeper's role.
Their origins were buried in his past,
lost syllables in a language of forgetting.
Perhaps they were his misbegotten brood,
conceived by night in another age, but why
should he be vexed, as in his wanton prime,
by buzzing guilts and blames, that cloud of flies?
His burden was to see the future plain.

On shore, he knew, under the beetling crags
lurked bands of marauders in their painted skins,
waiting for him to lapse into a drowse,
when they would pounce upon him in repose
and pin him down, compelling him
to rip the sweating membrane from the void
and practice his excruciating art.

He was the world's supreme illusionist,
taught by necessity how to melt his cage,
slipping at will through his adversaries' grasp
by self-denial, displaying one by one
his famous repertoire of shifting forms,
from lion and serpent to fire and waterfall.
But now he was heavy in his heart, and languid,
sensing the time had come to leave his flock.
Must he prepare himself once more for the test?
He could not recollect the secret codes
that gave him access to his other lives.

Half-listening to the plashing of the oars,
a disembodied chorus from the sea,
he shut his dimming eyes
and did not stir. These were the dreaded boatmen
racing to his side, and these their hairy hands.
He heard barbaric voices crying, "Prophesy!"

—STANLEY KUNITZ

told me, "They came to our house in a truck to do something to my sister. She can't go anywhere. Can't even go to Taco Bell anymore. Can't go to Jack in the Box. They'll jump you. They followed me home not long ago, I just headed for the sheriff's office."

There were odd quirks here, details that might not have seemed entirely consistent with normal adolescent acting up (the nineteen guns in the bedroom, the high-school trips to Vegas and to Laughlin, which is a Vegas spin-off on the Colorado River below Davis Dam), but they seemed for a while to go unconnected. People who had been targeted by the older boys believed themselves, they said later, "all alone in this." They believed that each occasion of harassment was discrete, unique. They did not yet see a pattern in the various incidents and felonies. They had not yet made certain inductive leaps. That was before the pipe bomb.

The pipe bomb exploded on the front porch of a house not far from Lakewood High School between three and three-thirty on the morning of February 12th. It destroyed one porch support. It tore holes in the stucco. It threw shrapnel into parked cars. Susie Hipp remembers that her husband was working the night shift at Rockwell and she was sleeping light as usual when the explosion woke her. The next morning, she asked a neighbor if she had heard the noise. "And she said, 'You're not going to believe it when I tell you what that was.' And she explained to me that a pipe bomb had blown up on someone's front porch. And that it had been a gang retaliatory thing. 'Gang thing?' I said. 'What are you *talking* about, a gang thing.' And she said, 'Well, you know, Spur Posse.' And I said, 'Spur Posse, what *is* Spur Posse?' "

A number of people around Lakewood were asking questions like these the morning after the pipe bomb went off. Some of the answers made them even more uneasy than the bomb had: their children, it seemed, knew all about Spur Posse. This was the point at which the local sheriff's office, which had been trying to get a handle on the rash of felonies around town, and Mike Escalante, the principal of Lakewood High School, decided that it would be a good idea to ask certain parents to attend a meeting at the high school. Letters were sent to twenty-five families, each of which was believed to have at least one Spur Posse son. The meeting was held March 2nd. Sheriff's deputies from both the local station and the arson-explosives detail spoke. The cause for concern, as the deputies then saw it, was that the trouble, whatever it was, seemed to be escalating: first the felonies, then a couple of car cherry bombs without much damage, now this eight-inch pipe bomb, which appeared to have been directed at one or more Spur Posse members and had been, according to a member of the arson-explosives detail, "intended to kill." Of the twenty-five families asked to attend, some fifteen people showed up. It was during this meeting that someone, it was hard to sort out who, said the word "rape."

Most people to whom I talked at first said that the issue had been raised by one of the parents, specifically by a mother whose son had told her that one of his friends had committed rape, but those who said this had not actually been present at the meeting. Asking about this after the fact tended to be construed as potentially hostile, because the Los Angeles attorney Gloria Allred, a specialist in high-profile gender cases, had by then appeared on the scene, giving press conferences, doing talk shows, talking about possible civil litigation on behalf of the six girls who had become her clients, and generally making people in Lakewood a little sensitive about who knew what and when did they know it and what had they done about what they knew. James Ellsberry, a former police officer who was now a security officer at McDonnell Douglas and whose sixteen-year-old daughter was one of the girls represented by Gloria Allred, has said that he reported an attack on his daughter to Mike Escalante as early as December, and was told that "it was not a school problem."

Mike Escalante, according to the Los Angeles *Times*, had "declined comment" when Gloria Allred brought this up at a press conference she staged at the school on April 1st. At some point after that, he stopped returning calls from the press. I talked one day to a Lakewood woman who said that she did attend the March 2nd meeting, and that she remembered the issue as one raised not by a parent but by a Lakewood High assistant principal, Karla Taylor. "She stood up and said, 'There's another issue we need to bring up.' She said, 'I'm really concerned about another issue and it

"Well, this is a reassuring note, Mr. Bonwell: 'No dolphins were killed in the preparation of this résumé.' "

hasn't been mentioned.' And she told how three girls, who did not know each other, had come to her and said they'd been raped." Karla Taylor told me that she did not remember who first raised the issue, only that it had then been discussed by everyone, in what she called "a clear and free exchange."

What happened next remains unclear. Lakewood students recalled investigators from the sheriff's sex-abuse unit, which operates out of Whittier, coming to the school, calling people in, questioning anyone who had even been seen talking at lunch to boys who were said to be Spurs. "I think they came up with a lot of wannabe boys," Sharon Jones told me. "Boys who wanted to belong to something that had notoriety to it." This suggested a certain general knowledge that arrests might have been pending, but school authorities have said that they knew nothing until the morning of March 18th, when sheriff's deputies appeared in Mike Escalante's office and said that they were going into classrooms to take boys out in custody.

"There was never any allegation that any of these incidents took place on the school grounds or at school events or going to and from school," Carl Cohn said on the morning we talked in his Long Beach Unified School District office. He had not been present that morning when the boys were taken out of their classrooms in shorts and handcuffs, but the Los Angeles *Times* and the Long Beach *Press-Telegram* and the television-news vans had. "Arresting the youngsters at school might have been convenient, but it very much contributed to what is now this media circus," he said. "The sheriff's department had a press briefing. In Los Angeles. Where they notified the media that they were going in. All you have to do is mention that the perpetrators are students at a particular school and everybody gets on the freeway."

The boys arrested were detained for four nights. All but one sixteen-year-old, who was charged with lewd conduct against a ten-year-old girl, were released without charges. When those still enrolled at Lakewood High went back to school, they were greeted with cheers by some students. "Of *course* they were treated as heroes, they'd been wrongly accused," I was told by Donald Belman, whose youngest son, Kristopher, was one of those arrested and released. "These girls pre-planned these things. They wanted to be looked on favorably, they wanted to be part of the clique. They wanted to be, hopefully, the girlfriends of these studs on campus." The Belman family celebrated Kristopher's release by going out for hamburgers at McDonald's, which was, Donald Belman told the Los Angeles *Times*, "the American way."

Some weeks later, the District Attorney's office released a statement, which read in part, "After completing an extensive investigation and analysis of the evidence, our conclusion is that there is no credible evidence of forcible rape involving any of these boys. . . . Although there is evidence of unlawful sexual intercourse, it is the policy of this office not to file criminal charges where there is consensual sex between teenagers. . . . The arrogance and contempt for young women which have been displayed, while appalling, cannot form the basis for criminal charges."

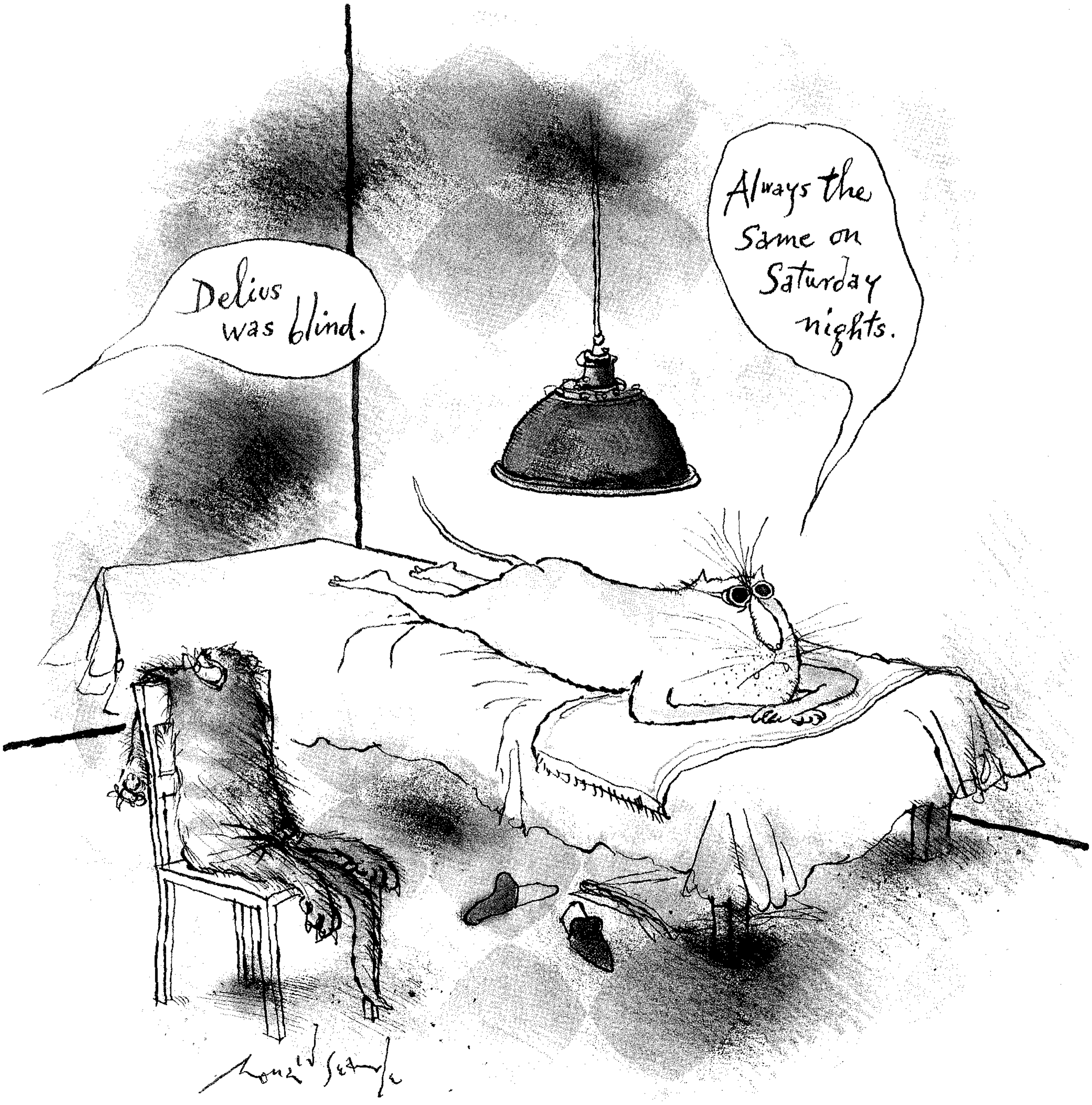
"The District Attorney on this did her homework," Donald Belman told me. "She questioned all these kids, she found out these girls weren't the victims they were made out to be. One of these girls had tattoos, for chrissake." "If it's true about the ten-year-old, I feel bad for her and her family," one of the Spurs told David Ferrell, of the Los Angeles *Times*. "My regards go out to the family." As far as Lakewood High was concerned, Mike Escalante said, it was time to begin "the healing process."

DONALD AND DOTTIE BELMAN, who for better or for worse became the most public of the Spur Posse parents, lived for twenty-two of their twenty-five years of marriage in a beige stucco house on Greentop Street in Lakewood. Donald Belman, who works as a salesman for an aerospace vender, selling to the large machine shops and to prime contractors like Douglas, graduated in 1963 from Lakewood High, spent four years in the Marine Corps, and came home to start a life with Dottie, herself a 1967 Lakewood High graduate. "I held out for that white dress," Dottie Belman recently told Janet Wiscombe, of the Long Beach *Press-Telegram*. "The word 'sex' was never spoken in my home. People in movies went into the bedroom and closed the door and came out with a smile on their face. Now people are having brutal sex on TV. They aren't making love. There is nothing romantic about it."

This is a family that has been, by its own and other accounts, intensively focussed on its three sons—Billy, twenty-three; Dana, twenty; and Kristopher, eighteen—all of whom still, at the time I spoke to their father, lived at home. "I'd hate to have my kids away from me for two or three days in Chicago or New York," Donald Belman told me by way of explaining why he had reluctantly given his imprimatur to the appearance of his two younger sons on "The Home Show," which is shot in Los Angeles, but not initially on "Jenny Jones," which is shot in Chicago. "All these talk shows start calling, I said, 'Don't do it. They're just going to lie about you, they're going to set you up.' The more the boys said no, the more the shows enticed them. 'The Home Show' was where I relented. They were offering a thousand dollars and a limo and it was in L.A. 'Jenny Jones' offered, I think, fifteen hundred dollars, but they'd have to fly."

In the years before this kind of guidance was needed, Donald Belman was always available to coach the boys' teams. There was Park League, there was Little League. There were Pony League, Colt League, Pop Warner. Dottie Belman regularly served as Team Mother, and she remembers literally running home from her job, as a hairdresser, so that she could have dinner on the table at five-fifteen every afternoon. "They would make a home run or a touchdown and I held my head high," she told the *Press-Telegram*. "We were reliving our past. We'd walk into Little League and we were hot stuff. I'd go to Von's and people would come up to me

GREAT MOMENTS IN MUSIC


Delius was blind.
Always the same on Saturday nights.

and say, 'Your kids are great.' I was so proud. Now I go to Von's at 5 A.M. in disguise. I've been Mother of the Year. I've sacrificed everything for my kids. Now I feel like I have to defend my honor."

THE youngest Belman, Kristopher, who graduated from Lakewood High this June, was one of the boys arrested and released without charges in March. "I was crazy that weekend," his father told me in April. "My boy's in jail, Kris, he's never been in any trouble whatsoever, he's an average student, a star athlete. He doesn't even have to be in school, he has enough credits to graduate, you don't have to stay in school after you're eighteen. But he's there. Just to be with his friends." Kristopher was, around the time of graduation, arraigned on a charge of "forcible lewd conduct," based on an alleged 1989 incident involving a girl who was then thirteen. The oldest Belman son, Billy, is, according to his father, working and going to school. The middle son, Dana, graduated from Lakewood High in 1991, and was named, as his father and virtually everyone else who mentioned him pointed out, Performer of the Year 1991, for wrestling, in the Lakewood Youth Sports Hall of Fame. The Lakewood Youth Sports Hall of Fame is not at the high school and not at City Hall but in the McDonald's at the corner of Woodruff and Del Amo. "They're all standouts athletically," Donald Belman told me. "My psychology and philosophy is this: I'm a standup guy, I love my sons, I'm proud of their accomplishments." Dana, his father said, is now "looking for work," a quest complicated by the thirteen felony burglary and forgery charges on which he is awaiting trial.

Dottie Belman, who had cancer surgery in April, filed for divorce a year ago but until recently continued to live with her husband and three sons on Greentop Street. "If Dottie wants to start a new life, I'm not going to hold her back," Donald Belman told the *Press-Telegram*. "I'm a solid guy. Just a solid citizen. I see no reason for any thought that our family isn't just all-American, basic and down-to-earth." Dottie Belman, when she talked to the *Press-Telegram*, was more reflective. "The wrecking ball shot right through the mantel and the house has crumbled," she said. "Dana said the other day, 'I want to be in the ninth grade again, and I want to do everything differently. I had it all. I was Mr. Lakewood. I was a star. I was popular. As soon as I graduated, I lost the recognition. I want to go back to the wonderful days. Now it's one disaster after another.' "

Several times in Lakewood, I found myself trying to remember the details of something I had last read perhaps thirty years before, a story called "Golden Land," one of the few pieces of fiction William Faulkner set in California. I could not quite focus on what it had been about "Golden Land" that brought the story so insistently to mind, but one day when I was trying to come by some Lakewood High School yearbooks—"We've had a few people asking for those," the research librarian at the Lakewood branch library had said dryly—it occurred to me to look the story up. "Golden Land" deals with a day in the life of Ira Ewing, Jr., age forty-eight, for whom "twenty-five years of industry and desire" have recently come to ashes. At fourteen, Ira fled Nebraska on a westbound freight. By thirty, he had married the daughter of a Los Angeles carpenter, had fathered a son and a daughter, and had a foothold in the real-estate business. By the time we meet him, he is in a position to spend fifty thousand dollars a year, a sizable amount in 1935, the year that "Golden Land" was published. He has been able to bring his widowed mother from Nebraska and install her in a house in Glendale. He has been able to provide for his children "luxuries and advantages which his own father not only could not have conceived in fact but would have condemned completely in theory."

Yet nothing is working out. Ira's daughter, Samantha, who wants to be in show business, has taken the name April Lalear, and appears to be testifying in a trial reported on page one ("APRIL LALEAR BARES ORGY SECRETS") of the newspaper placed on the reading table next to Ira's bed. Samantha, who in the newspaper photographs "alternately stared back or flaunted long pale shins," is not the exclusive source of the leaden emptiness Ira now feels instead of hunger: there is also his son, Voyd, who continues to live at home but has not spoken without resentment to his father in two years, not since the morning when the son, drunk, was delivered home to the father wearing, "in place of underclothes, a woman's brassière and step-ins."

Since Ira Ewing prides himself on being, as it were, a standup guy, a solid citizen, someone who will hear no suggestion that his family is not all-American, basic, and down-to-earth, he has not been inclined to discuss his domestic trials, and has tried to keep the newspapers featuring April Lalear from his mother. Via the gardener, however, his mother has got word of her granddaughter's testimony, and she is reminded of the warning she once gave Ira: "You make money too easy. This whole country is too easy for us Ewings. It may be all right for them that have been born here for generations; I don't know about that. But not for us."

"But these children were born here," Ira had said.

"Just one generation," his mother said. "The generation before that they were born in a sodroofed dugout on the Nebraska wheat frontier. And the one before that in a log house in Missouri. And the one before that in a Kentucky blockhouse with Indians around it. This world has never been easy for Ewings. Maybe the Lord never intended it to be."

"Golden Land" does not entirely hold up, nor, I suppose, will it ever stand among the best Faulkner stories. Yet it retains, for certain Californians, a nagging resonance. I grew up in a California family that had been, as Ira Ewing's mother said, "born here for generations," in my case six. "The trouble with these new people," I recall hearing again and again as a child in Sacramento, "is they think it's supposed to be easy." The phrase "these new people" generally signified people who had moved to California after the Second World War but was tacitly extended back to include the migration from the Dust Bowl during the nineteen-thirties, and often further. New people, we were given to understand, remained ignorant of our special history, insensible to the hardships en-

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TRURO

I found a white stone on the beach
inlaid with a blue-green road I could not follow.
All night I'd slept in fits and starts,
my only memory the in-out, in-out of the tide.
And then morning. And then a walk,
the white stone beckoning, glinting in the sun.
I felt its calm power as I held it
and wished a wish I cannot tell.
It fit in my hand like a hand gently
holding my hand through a sleepless night.
A stone so like, so unlike,
all the others it could only be mine.

The wordless white stone of my life!

—ELIZABETH SPIRES

dured to make it, blind not only to the dangers the place still presented but to the shared responsibilities its continued habitation demanded.

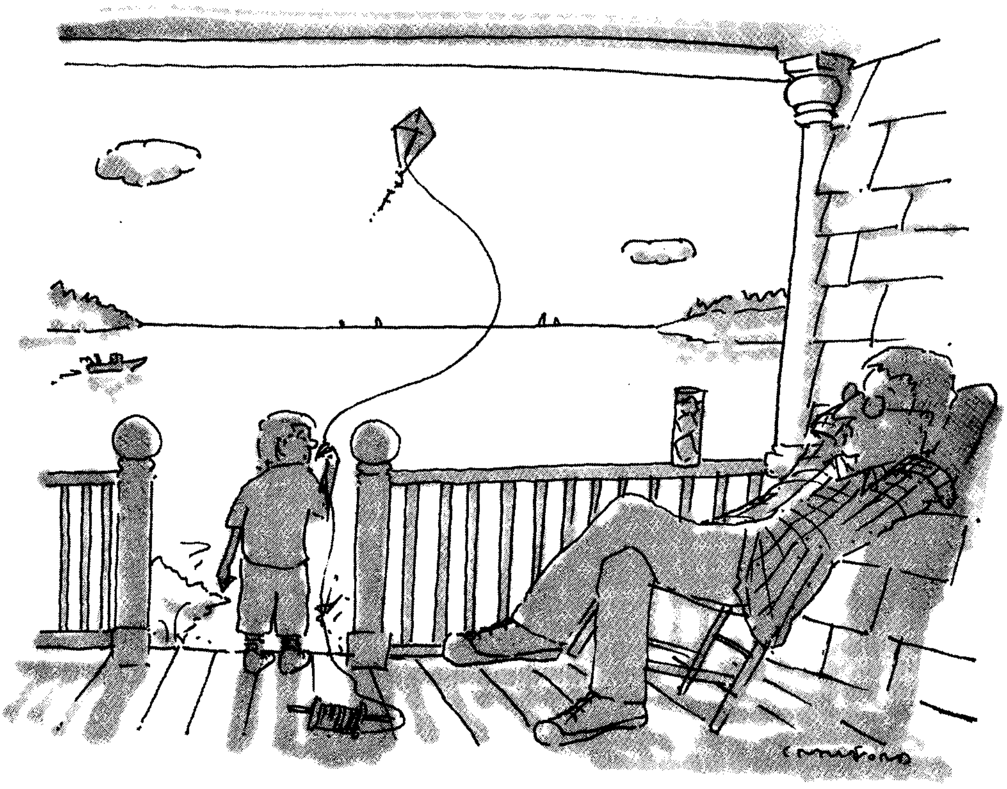
New people, for example, did not count it their responsibility to kill rattlesnakes. New people believed that water came from the tap, a right. New people did not understand the necessary dynamic of the fires, the seven-year cycles of flood and drought, the physical reality of the place. "Why didn't they go back to Truckee?" a young mining engineer from back east asked when my grandfather pointed out the site of the Donner party's last encampment. I recall hearing this story repeatedly. I also recall the same grandfather, my mother's father, whose family had migrated from the hardscrabble Appalachian frontier in the eighteenth century to the hardscrabble Sierra Nevada foothills in the nineteenth, working himself up into writing a letter to the editor over a fifth-grade textbook in which one of the illustrations summed up California history as a sunny progression from Spanish señorita to gold miner to Golden Gate Bridge. What the illustration seemed to my grandfather to suggest was that those responsible for the textbook believed making California to have been "easy," history rewritten, as he saw it, for the new people. Ira Ewing and his children were, of course, new people. Places like Lakewood did not exist before the new people came. Places like Lakewood could be seen, by people like my grandfather, as the wrong side of the California dream, but the true ambiguity was this: places like Lakewood are also what made California rich.

CALIFORNIANS whose family ties to the state predate the Second World War have an equivocal and often uneasy relationship to the postwar expansion. Joan Irvine Smith, whose family's eighty-eight-thousand-acre ranch in Orange County was developed during the nineteen-sixties, recently created, on the twelfth floor of the McDonnell Douglas Building in Irvine, the Irvine Museum, dedicated to the California Impressionist or plein-air paintings she had begun collecting in 1991. "There is more nostalgia for me in these paintings than in actually going out to look at what used to be the ranch now that it has been developed, because I'm looking at what I looked at as a child," she told *Art in California* by way of explaining her interest in this genre, which had begun, she said, when she was a child and would meet her stepfather for lunch at the California Club and see the California landscapes lent by the members. "I can look at those paintings and see what the ranch was as I remember it when I was a little girl."

The California Club, which is on Flower Street in downtown Los Angeles, was then and is still the heart of Southern California's old-line business establishment. On any given day since the Second World War, virtually anyone lunching there, most particularly not excluding Joan Irvine, has had a direct or indirect investment in the development of California, which is to say the obliteration of the undeveloped California now on view at the Irvine Museum. In the seventy-four paintings chosen for inclusion in "Selections from the Irvine Museum," the catalogue published by the museum to accompany its travelling exhibition, there are hills and desert and mesas and arroyos. There are mountains, coastline, big sky. There are stands of eucalyptus, sycamore, oak, cottonwood. There are washes of California poppies. As for fauna, there are, in the seventy-four paintings, three sulfur-crested cockatoos, one white peacock, two horses, and nine people, four of whom are dwarfed by the landscape and two of whom are indistinct Indians paddling a canoe.

Some of this is romantic (the indistinct Indians), some washed in a slightly falsified golden glow. Most of these paintings, though, reflect the way the place actually looks, or looked, not only to Joan Irvine but also to me and to anyone else who knew it as recently as 1960. It is this close representation of a familiar yet obliterated landscape that gives the Irvine collection its curious effect, that of a short-term-memory glitch: these paintings hang in a city, Irvine (population 117,900, with a University of California campus enrolling 17,100 students), that was less than forty years ago a mirror image of the paintings themselves, bean fields and grazing, the heart of but by no means all of the cattle-and-sheep operation amassed by the grandfather of the founder of the Irvine Museum.

Joan Irvine Smith had replaced her mother on the board of the Irvine Company in 1957, the year she was twenty-four. She had seen quite clearly the solu-



"Hey, Ben! We're in Maine now. We don't have to perform."

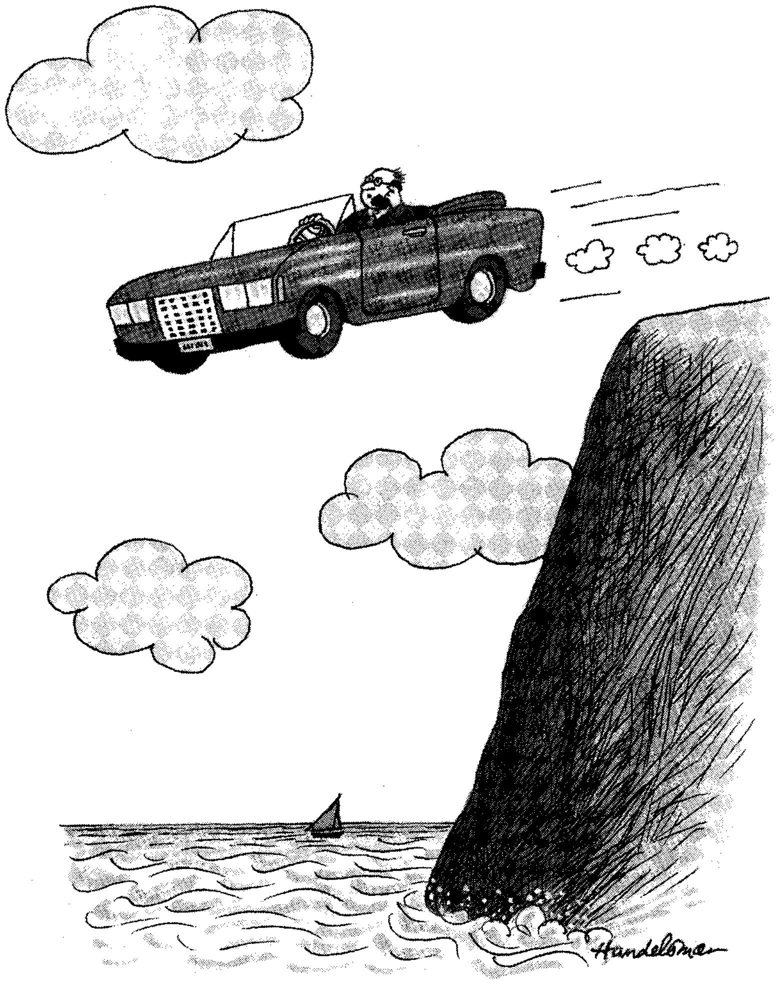
tion she wanted for the ranch, and she had seen the rest of the board as part of the problem: by making small deals, selling off bits of the whole, the board was nibbling away at the company's principal asset, the size of its holding. It was she who had pressed the architect William Pereira to develop a master plan, it was she who had seen the collateral benefit in a U.C. campus and been willing to give one, and it was she who had insisted, above all, on maintaining an interest in the ranch's development.

And, in the end, which meant after several years of plot points that could have been written intact into "Dallas," and a series of litigations extending to 1991, it was she who had more or less prevailed. In 1960, before the Irvine ranch was developed, there were 719,500 people in all of Orange County. In 1990, there were 2,410,556, most of whom would not be there if two families, the Irvines in the middle part of the county and the O'Neills in the southern, had not developed their ranches. Some of these people have since settled into the run-down motels left from Orange County's first tourist boom, and are called "motel people." Motel people have been defined by the Sacramento *Bee* political columnist Dan Walters as "those who can't afford the first- and last-month rent that would move them into apartment houses." In his 1986 book "The New California: Facing the 21st Century" Walters quoted the Orange County *Register* on the motel people: "Mostly Anglo, they're the county's newest migrant workers: instead of picking grapes, they inspect semiconductors." "I can look at these paintings and look back," Joan Irvine Smith said to *Art in California* about the collection she bought with the proceeds of looking exclusively, and to a famous degree, forward. "I can see California as it was and as we will never see it again." Hers is an extreme example of the conundrum that to one degree or another occurs to any Californian who profited from the boom years: If we could still see California as it was, how many of us could now afford to see it?

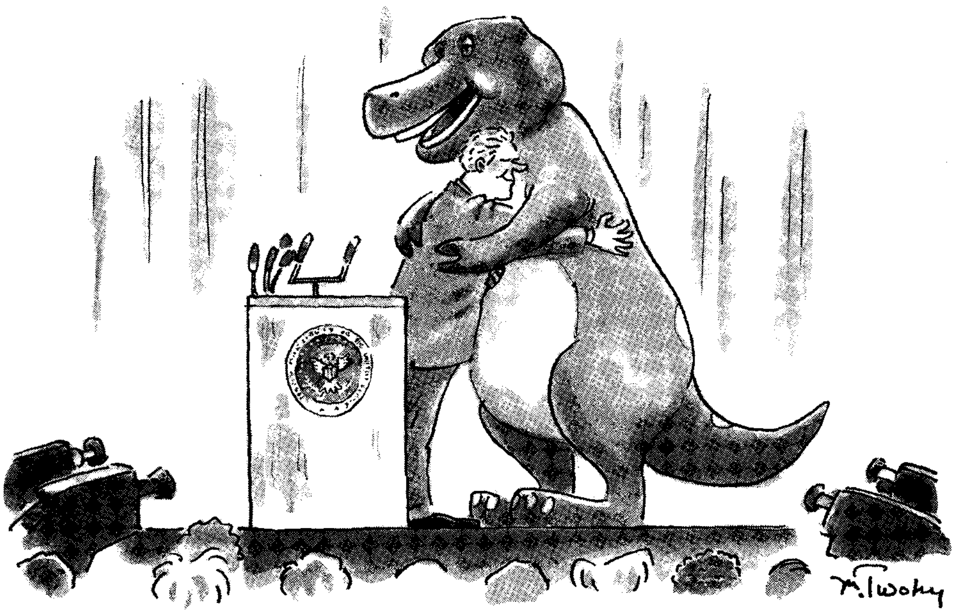
THE election, on June 8th, of Richard Riordan as mayor of Los Angeles was widely interpreted, outside California and even to a lesser extent inside, either as a ringing rejection of President Clinton and "liberalism" or as the result of a retrograde wish on the part of a selfish electorate to again see California as it was. Self-interested white voters had staged, in both views, a putsch to reassert the old order over a multicultural community struggling to be born, represented in this construct by the surviving opposition candidate, Michael Woo, cast here as an ethnic liberal. These interpretations were equally misleading. Each candidate, his campaign persona notwithstanding, was a downtown insider, as are most candidates for mayor in most American cities. Each had spent his adult life facilitating development. Each had strong business connections, Riordan through his career as a lawyer and specialist in leveraged buyouts, Woo through his father and his grandfather, who controlled the powerful Cathay Bank in Los Angeles and had been instrumental in developing trade relations with Taiwan.

Woo happened to be a Democrat, Riordan happened to be a Republican. This was, however, neither a partisan election nor one that broke naturally along party lines. Woo had asked for and finally received President Clinton's endorsement, but the endorsement was notably neutral, not least because a significant part of the 1992 Clinton-Gore California campaign apparatus was running the Riordan campaign. Such was the absence of ideology in this campaign that coverage at one point turned on the question of whose previous banking connection, Riordan's 1st Business or Woo's Cathay, had resulted in fewer minority loans. Woo supporters maintained, not too winningly, that ninety-seven per cent of Cathay's loans were minority loans, since "Asian-American" was a minority.

Woo did not represent a multicultural community struggling to be born, and lost largely because he failed to rouse sufficient votes in the Asian and Latino communities, where a significant number of those who did turn out (thirty-one per cent of Asian voters and forty-three per cent of Latino) voted for Riordan. Nor did Riordan, a New York-born Princeton graduate who moved to Los Angeles in 1956 to join his first law firm, O'Melveny & Myers, represent California "as it was." The Cali-



"Alison, please phone Mr. Bradshaw and tell him I won't be available for lunch. Then call the Coast Guard and tell them I'm drowning near Long Branch, New Jersey."



PRESIDENT CLINTON EXCHANGES HUGS WITH HIS NEW VIOLENCE CZAR

fornia Riordan represented was that of the postwar expansion, the California of the good times, the California of the apparently endless prosperity, the California that only this year turned up missing, which was why he won.

In many ways, this was a triumph of magical thinking. I have never been invited to a one-on-one dinner at Richard Riordan's house in Brentwood Park, but people who did attend such dinners during the campaign reported that the candidate ordered in pizza, placed it in its box on the dining-room table, and escorted the guest down to an astonishingly extensive wine cellar, there to select a legendary Bordeaux. People repeated this story because there was about the pizza on the dining-room table and the trip to the wine cellar the same aspect of performance, the show of symbolic confidence, that characterized the entire Riordan campaign. As a candidate, Riordan managed to project the absolute conviction that he could transmit his own good fortune, which had been to ride the boom years into an estimated hundred million dollars, to the community at large. On July 2nd, the day after his inauguration, this banner headline appeared, as if in Oz, across the front page of the Los Angeles *Times:* "RIORDAN SEES RENEWAL FOR L.A."

In the end, this telekinetic vision was, like the pizza, as good as anything else on the table, since, to the extent that the election had involved promises to "turn L.A. around" (Riordan), or to "bring us together" (Woo), virtually everyone understood it to be irrelevant. The Los Angeles city charter is such that a mayor has very limited power to effect even minor change, and most people understood exactly what it would take to either turn L.A. around or bring us together. It would take what was not on the table, a return to the unbroken prosperity the city had known during the entire lives of many of its voting residents.

The extent to which this postwar prosperity shaped the Los Angeles imagination, and the expectations of its citizens, would be hard to overestimate. Good times came with the territory, or did until recently, rolled in with the regularity of the breakers on what was once the coast of the Irvine ranch and is now Newport Beach. Good times were the core conviction of the place, and it was their notable absence this year that seemed to unsettle Los Angeles in ways not yet entirely plumbed.

From a certain angle, it might have been the best of years: the intensity and length of the rains that broke the most recent of the droughts had rendered even the meaner streets drenched, clean, glittering. Roses threw off bloom after bloom. Lawns stayed green all year. The jacaranda came in April, when there was still wild mustard on the hills, an intense blue haze against the translucent yellow of the mustard. What had become since the Second World War the most universally recognizable images of Los Angeles, the parabolic sweep of the freeway interchanges and the aerial overview of unbroken habitation from the San Bernardino Mountains to the sea, seemed, in the washed light that follows the rains, heightened, utopian. Yet what had been engraved in the Southern California memory as the given of the place, the irresistible upward momentum of a gross local product bigger than the gross national products of many Western nations, the momentum that created the parabolic sweeps of the interchanges and the unbroken habitation from the mountains to the sea, was for the time being just that, a memory.

Hard times came late to California. The 1987 market crash was widely if not consciously seen in Los Angeles as something that happened in New York, a peculiarity that would not travel, on the order of coöperative apartment ownership. Even when the plants started closing down and the "For Lease" signs started going up, very few people wanted to see a trend. This was a state in which virtually every county was to one degree or another dependent on defense contracts, from the billions upon billions of federal dollars that flowed into Los Angeles County to the five-digit contracts in counties like Plumas and Tehama and Tuolumne, yet the sheer geographical isolation of different parts of the state tended to obscure the elementary fact of its interrelatedness. Even in Los Angeles County, where it was possible to live and die in El Segundo without ever seeing Encino, or in Glendale without ever seeing Downey, there seemed no meaningful understanding that if General Motors shut down its assembly plant in Van Nuys, say, as it finally did in 1992, twenty-six hundred jobs lost, the bell would eventually toll in Bel Air, where the people lived who held the paper on the people who held the mortgages in Van Nuys.

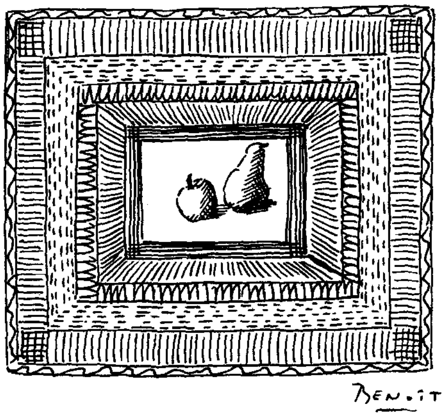
In June of 1988, I asked a residential real-estate broker on the West Side of Los Angeles what effect a defense cutback would have on the real-estate boom then in progress. She said that such a cutback would have no effect, because people who worked for Hughes and Douglas did not live in Brentwood or Santa Monica or Beverly Hills or Bel Air or Holmby Hills. "They live in Torrance maybe, or Canoga Park, or somewhere," she said. "Unless they're Henry Singleton." That was five years ago. People who worked for Hughes did then live in Canoga Park. Henry Singleton, who at the time was the chairman of Teledyne, which contracted part of Rockwell's troubled B-1 bomber program, did then live in Holmby Hills.

Henry Singleton has since moved to Santa Fe, and the ninety-six extant B-1s remain grounded with mechanical problems. In March, Hughes Aircraft announced that it would move its engineering facilities from Canoga Park to Tucson. In April, the Los Angeles County assessor's office reduced property taxes for many homeowners, judging that the average value of a single-family residence in the county had declined twelve per cent. In May, *California Journal* reported that Northrop was not ruling out a move similar to the one announced by Hughes. I was told last week, by a friend who was thinking of selling his house in Beverly Hills, that one well-known residential broker is now advising clients that the market in Zip Code 90210 is down forty-seven and a half per cent. This week, another friend bought a house just west of Hancock Park, on the market three years, for what he described as "considerably less" than half its asking price.

I recall being told, by virtually everyone to whom I spoke in Los Angeles during the few months after the 1992 riot, how much the riot had "changed" the city. Most of the people who said this had lived in Los Angeles during the 1965 Watts riot, as I had, but 1992, they assured me, had been "different," 1992 had "changed everything." The words people used seemed overfreighted, words like "sad" and "bad." This puzzled me, since, by and large, these were people who had by no means needed a riot to tell them that a volatile difference of circumstance and understanding had long existed between the city's haves and its have-nots, and I pressed for a closer description of how Los Angeles had changed. After the riot, I was told, it was impossible to sell a house in Los Angeles. That it had also been impossible to sell a house in Los Angeles before the riot was a harder construct to consider.

The sad, bad times began, most people will now allow, in 1989, when virtually every defense contractor in Southern California began laying off workers. TRW had already dropped a thousand jobs. Rockwell had dropped five thousand as its B-1 program ended. Northrop dropped three thousand. Hughes dropped six thousand. Lockheed's union membership declined, at some point between 1981 and 1989, from fifteen thousand to seven thousand. McDonnell Douglas asked five thousand managers to resign, then compete against one another for twenty-nine hundred jobs, but there was still, in McDonnell Douglas towns like Long Beach and Lakewood, space to maneuver, space for a little reflexive optimism and maybe even a trip to Vegas or Laughlin, since the parent corporation's Douglas Aircraft Company, the entity responsible for commercial as opposed to defense aircraft, was hiring for what was then its new MD-11 line. "Douglas is going great guns right now because of the commercial sector," I was told in 1989 by David Hensley, who then headed the U.C.L.A. Business Forecasting Project. "Airline traffic escalated tremendously after deregulation. They're all beefing up their fleets, buying planes, which means Boeing up in Washington and Douglas here. That's a buffer against the downturn in defense spending."

These early defense layoffs were described at the time as "correctives" to the buildup of the Reagan years. Later, the layoffs became "reorganizations" or "consolidations," words that still suggested the normal trimming and tacking of individual companies; the acknowledgment that the entire aerospace industry might be in trouble did not enter the language until recently, when "the restructuring" became preferred usage. The language, like the geography, had worked to encyst the problem in certain communities, and it had remained possible for Los Angeles at large to see the layoffs as abstractions, the predictable if difficult detritus of geopolitical change, not logically connected to whether the mini-mall at the corner made it or went under. It was August of 1990 before most people noticed that the commercial and residential real-estate markets had dried up in Los Angeles. It was on October 28th of that year that a Los Angeles *Times* business report tentatively suggested that a local slowdown "appears to have begun."



Before 1991 was over, California had lost sixty thousand aerospace jobs. Many of those jobs had moved to Southern and Southwestern states offering lower salaries, fewer regulations, and state and local governments not averse to granting tax incentives. Hughes was in the process of shifting its El Segundo operation to Tucson, after passage by the Arizona legislature of a piece of tax-incentive legislation known locally as "the Hughes bill." Rockwell was entertaining bids on its El Segundo plant. Lockheed had decided to move production on its Advanced Tactical Fighter from Burbank to Marietta, Georgia. By 1992, more than seven hundred manufacturing plants had relocated or chosen to expand outside California, taking with them a hundred and seven thousand jobs. Dun & Bradstreet reported nine thousand nine hundred and eighty-five California business failures during the first six months of 1992.

Analysts spoke approvingly of the transition from large companies to small businesses. The Los Angeles *Daily News* noted the "trend toward a new, more independent work force that will become less reliant on the company to provide for them and more inclined toward entrepreneurship," in other words, no benefits and no fixed salary, a recipe for motel people. Early in 1991, the Arco oil refinery in Carson, near where the Harbor and San Diego freeways intersect, had placed advertisements in the Los Angeles *Times* and the Orange County *Register* for twenty-eight jobs paying $11.42 to $17.45 an hour. By the end of a week, some fourteen thousand applicants had appeared in person at the refinery, and an unspecified number of

TOURISTS

ILLUSTRATIONS BY WILLIAM STEIG

Cramped like sardines on the Queens, and sedated,
The sittings all first, the roommates mismated,

Three nuns at the table, the waiter a barber,
Then dumped with their luggage at some frumpish harbor,

Veering through rapids in a vapid *rapido*
To view the new moon from a ruin on the Lido,

Or a sundown in London from a rundown Mercedes,
Then high-borne to Glyndebourne for Orféo in Hades,

Embarrassed in Paris in Harris tweed, dying to
Get to the next museum piece that they're flying to,

Finding, in Frankfurt, that one indigestible
Comestible makes them too ill for the festival,

Footloose in Lucerne, or taking a pub in in
Glasgow or Belfast, or maudlin in Dublin, in-

sensitive, garrulous, querulous, audible,
Drunk in the Dolomites, tuning a portable,

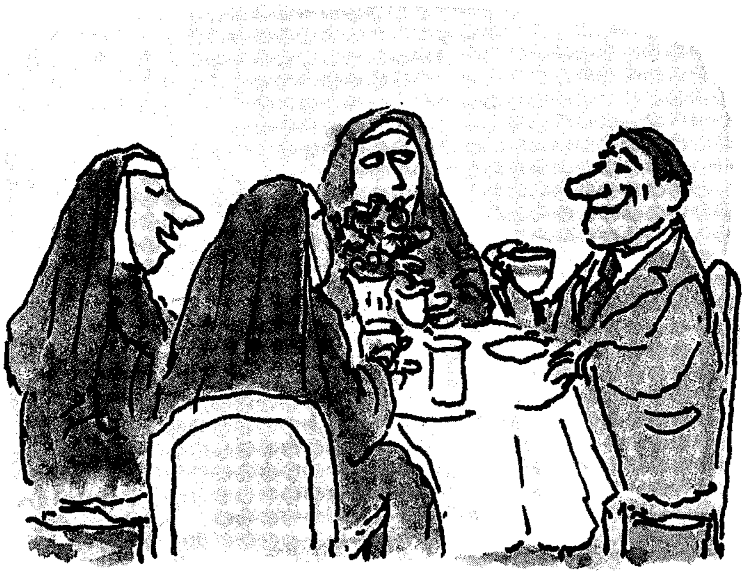
Homesick in Stockholm, or dressed to toboggan
At the wrong time of year in too dear Copenhagen,

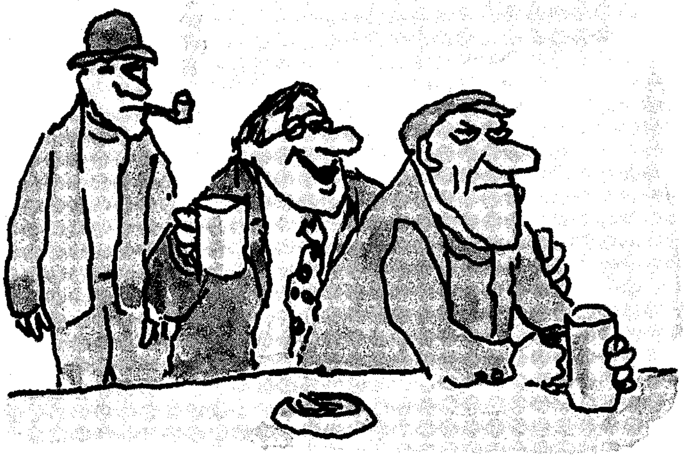
Generally being too genial or hostile—
Too grand at the Grand, too old at the Hostel—

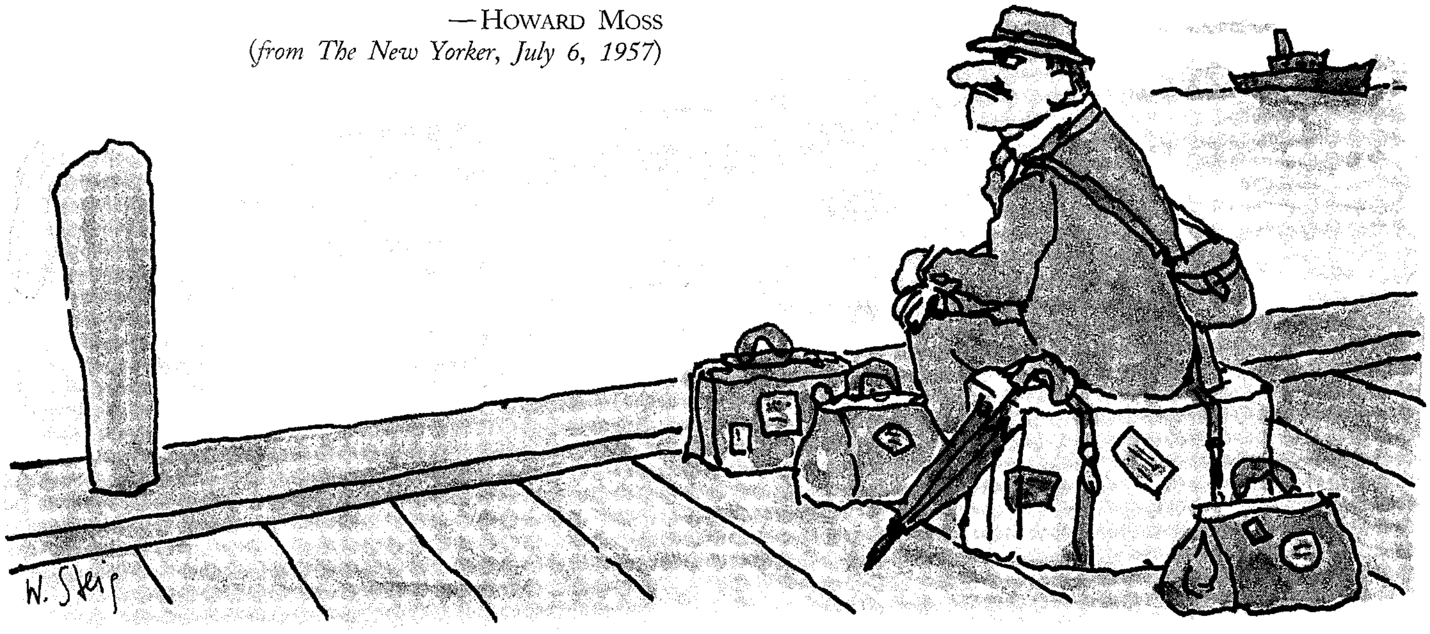
Humdrum conundrums, what's to become of them?
Most will come home, but there will be some of them

Subsiding like Lawrence in Florence, or crazily
Ending up tending shop up in Fiesole.

—HOWARD MOSS
(*from The New Yorker, July 6, 1957*)



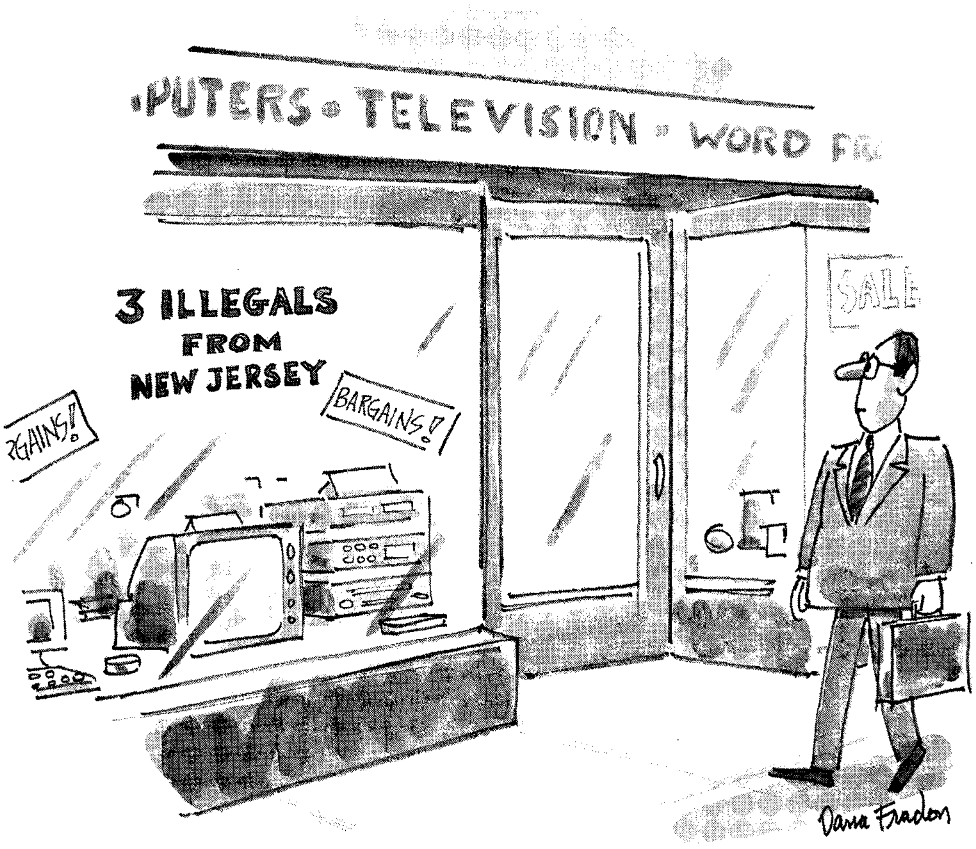




others had mailed in résumés. "I couldn't get in the front gate," an Arco spokesman told the *Times*. "Security people were directing traffic. It was quite a sight to see."

No one in California is now looking at the short term. Clark Kerr, who was the president of the University of California from 1958 to 1967 and developed the master plan that extended higher education throughout the state, spoke recently to interviewers for a University of California newsletter about what he believed would be "a very dangerous period." The dangerous period, he figured, would be "from about 1995-96 to 1998-99." Those would be the years, he said, "when the rest of the country has recovered and California will not have fully recovered." According to the Commission on State Finance, some eight hundred thousand jobs were lost in California during the past five years. More than half of the jobs lost were in Los Angeles County. The commission's May, 1993, report estimates the loss, between now and 1997, of ninety thousand more aerospace jobs, as well as thirty-five thousand civilian jobs at bases scheduled for closure, but warns that "the potential loss could be greater if the defense industry continues to move and consolidate operations outside California." In April, the Bank of America estimated six to eight hundred thousand jobs lost since 1990, but made an even bleaker and more immediate projection: four to five hundred thousand more jobs lost, in the state's "downsizing industries," between 1993 and 1995. This is what people are talking about when they talk about the riot.

PEOPLE who work on the line in the big aerospace plants constituted, until recently, a kind of family. Many of them were second generation, and would mention the father who worked on the Snark missile, the brother who was foreman of a fabricating shop in Pico Rivera, the uncle who used to get what seemed like half the F-89 line out to watch Little League. These people might move among the half-dozen or so major suppliers but almost never outside them. The conventions of the competitive marketplace remained alien to them. They worked to military specifications, or "milspec," a system that, the Washington *Post* noted recently, provides fifteen pages of specs for the making of chocolate cookies. They took considerable pride in working in an industry where decisions were not made in what Kent Kresa, the chairman of Northrop, dismissed as "a green eyeshade way." They believed their companies to be consecrated to what they construed as the national interest, and to deserve, in turn, the nation's unequivocal support. They believed in McDonnell Douglas. They believed in Rockwell, Hughes, Northrop, Lockheed, General Dynamics, TRW, Litton Industries. They believed in the impossibility of adapting even the most elementary market principles to the manufacturing of aircraft. They believed the very notion of "fixed price," which was the shorthand contractors used to indicate that the government was threatening not to pay for cost overruns, to be antithetical to innovation, anathema to a process that was by its own definition undefined.



Since this was an industry in which machine parts were drilled to within two-thousandths or even one-thousandth of an inch, tolerances that did not lend themselves to automation, the people who worked in these plants had never, as they put it, gone robotic. They were the last of the medieval handworkers, and the spaces in which they worked, the huge structures with the immaculate concrete floors and the big rigs and the overhead cameras and the project banners and the flags of the foreign buyers, became the cathedrals of the Cold War, occasionally visited by but never entirely legible to the uninitiated. "Assembly lines are like living things," I was told a few years ago by the manager of assembly operations on the F/A-18 line at Northrop in El Segundo. "A line will gain momentum and build toward a delivery. I can touch it, I can feel it. Here on the line, we're a little more blunt and to the point, because this is where the rubber meets the road. If we're going to ship an airplane every two days, we need people to respond to this." "Navy Pilots Are Depending on You" read a banner in the high shadowy reaches above the F/A-18 line. "Build It As If You Were Going to Fly It" read another. A toolbox carried the message "With God & Guts & Guns Our Freedom Was Won!"

This was a world bounded by a diminishing set of coördinates. There were from the beginning a finite number of employers who needed what these people knew how to deliver, and what these people knew how to deliver was only one kind of product. "Our industry's record at defense conversion is unblemished by success," Norman Augustine, the chairman and C.E.O. of Martin Marietta, told the Washington *Post* in June. "Why is it rocket scientists can't sell toothpaste? Because we don't know the market, or how to research, or how to market the product. Other than that, we're in good shape." Increasingly, the prime aerospace contractors came to define themselves as "integrators," meaning that a larger and larger proportion of what they delivered, in some cases as much as seventy-five per cent, had been supplied by subcontractors. The prime contractors were of course competitive with one another, but there was also an interdependence, a recognition that they had, vis-à-vis their shared principal customer, the federal government, a mutual interest. In this spirit, two or three competing contractors would typically "team" a project, submitting a joint bid, supporting one another during the lobbying phase, and finally dividing the spoils of production.

McDonnell Douglas was the prime contractor on the F/A-18, an attack aircraft used by both the Navy and the Marine Corps and sold by the military to such foreign users as the Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Australia, Canada, Spain, and Kuwait. McDonnell Douglas, however, teamed the F/A-18 with Northrop, which would every week send, from its El Segundo plant, two partial airplanes, called "shipsets," to the McDonnell Douglas facility in St. Louis. Each Northrop shipset for the F/A-18 included the fuselage and two tails, "stuffed," which is what aircraft people say to indicate that a piece of an airplane comes complete with its working components. Northrop and McDonnell Douglas teamed again on a prototype for the YF-23 Advanced Tactical Fighter but lost the contract to Lockheed, which had teamed its own A.T.F. prototype with Boeing and General Dynamics. Boeing, in turn, teamed its commercial 747 with Northrop, which supplied several 747 shipsets a month, each consisting of the center fuselage and associated subassemblies, or stuffing. General Dynamics had the prime contract with the Navy for the A-12 attack jet but had teamed it with McDonnell Douglas.

The perfect circularity of the enterprise, one in which politicians controlled the letting of government contracts to companies that in turn utilized the contracts to employ potential voters, did not encourage natural selection. When any single element changed in this hermetic and interrelated world—for example, a shift in the political climate enabling even one member of Congress to sense a gain in questioning the cost of even one Department of Defense project—the interrelatedness tended to work against adaptation. One tree falls and the food chain fails: on the day in 1991 when Richard B. Cheney, then the Secretary of Defense, finally cancelled the contract between General Dynamics and the Navy for the A-12, thousands of McDonnell Douglas jobs got wiped out in St. Louis, where McDonnell Douglas had been teaming the A-12 with General Dynamics.

To protect its headquarters plant in St. Louis, McDonnell Douglas moved some of the production on its own C-17 program there from Long Beach. To protect the program itself, the company opened a C-17 plant in Macon, Georgia, what was called in the industry a "double-hitter," situated as it was in both the home state of Senator Sam Nunn, the chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, and the home district of Representative J. Roy Rowland, a member of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee. "It was smart business to put a plant in Macon," a former McDonnell Douglas executive told Ralph Vartabedian, of the Los Angeles *Times*. "There wouldn't be a C-17 without Nunn's support. There is nothing illegal or immoral about wanting to keep your program funded."

The C-17 is a cargo plane with a capacity for landing, as its defenders frequently mention, "in places with short runways, like Bosnia." It has now been in funded development for eight years, during which time the Air Force has decreased the number of planes on order from two hundred and ten to a hundred and twenty and increased the projected cost of each plane from a hundred and fifty million dollars to three hundred and eighty million dollars. The C-17, even more than most programs, has been plagued by cost overruns and technical problems. There were flaws in the landing gear, a problem with the flaps. The C-17 has yet to meet its range and payload specifications. One test aircraft leaked fuel. Another emerged from a ground-strength-certification test with broken wings. Once off the ground, the plane showed a distressing readiness to pitch up its nose and go into a stall.

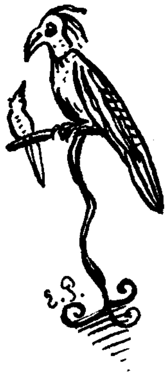
On June 14th, the Air Force accepted delivery of its first C-17 Globemaster III, more than a year behind schedule, already $1.4 billion over budget, and not yet within sight of a final design determination. Considerable show attended this delivery. Many points were made. The ceremony took place at Charleston Air Force Base, in South Carolina, which is the home state of Senator Strom Thurmond, the ranking minority member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, as well as of Representatives Floyd Spence, John M. Spratt, Jr., and Arthur Ravenel, Jr., all members of the House Armed Services Committee. Some thirty-five hundred officials turned out. The C-17 itself, which was being delivered with a hundred and twenty-five "waivers and deviations" from contract specifications and had been flown east with a load of ballast in the back of the plane to keep the nose from pitching up, was piloted on its delivery leg by General Merrill McPeak, the Air Force Chief of Staff. "We had it loaded with Army equipment . . . a couple of Humvees, twenty or thirty soldiers painted up for battle," General McPeak reported a few days later at a Pentagon briefing. "And I would just say that it's a fine airplane, it will be a wonderful capability when we get it fielded, it will make a big difference for us in terms of the global mobility requirement we have, and so I just think, you know, it's a home run."

Of the remaining employees at McDonnell Douglas's Long Beach plant, the plant on the Lakewood city line, eight thousand seven hundred are working right now on the C-17. What those eight thousand seven hundred workers will be doing next month or next year remains an open question since, even as the Air Force was demonstrating its resolute support of its own program, discussions had begun about how best to dispose of it. There were a number of options under consideration. One was to transfer management of the program from McDonnell Douglas to Boeing. Another was to further reduce the number of C-17s on order from a hundred and twenty to as few as twenty-five. The last-ditch option, the A-12 solution, was to just pull the plug.

OF the eighty-nine members of the Lakewood High School class of 1989 who responded, a year after graduation, to a school-district questionnaire asking what they were doing, seventy-one said that they were attending college full- or part-time. Forty-two of these were enrolled in Long Beach Community College. Five were at community colleges in the neighboring communities of Cerritos and Cypress. Twelve were at various nearby campuses (Fullerton, Long Beach, San Diego, Pomona) of California State University. Two had been admitted to the University of California system, one to Irvine and one to Santa Barbara. One was at U.S.C. Nine were at unspecified other campuses. During the 1990-91 school year, two hundred and thirty-four Lakewood High students were enrolled in the district's magnet program in aerospace technology, which channels students into Long Beach Community College and McDonnell Douglas. Lakewood High's S.A.T. scores for that year averaged 362 verbal and 440 math, a total of ninety-five points below the state average.

This is not a community that pushes its children hard, or launches them into the far world. Males are encouraged to continue, after graduation and indeed into adulthood, playing ball (many kinds of ball, all kinds of ball) in the parks and on the school grounds where they grew up. Females are encouraged to participate in specific sports of their own, as well as to support the team activities of the ballplayers. Virtually everyone to whom I spoke mentioned the city's superior sports program. "It's been a very clean community," John Todd, who was instrumental in the city's incorporation in 1954 and has served as city attorney ever since, told me. "The people that made it up were sound American citizens. We were oriented to our schools and churches and other local activities. We have a tremendous park-and-recreation program here in Lakewood. And it tended to keep people here." Sharon Jones, whose oldest son works for McDonnell Douglas and whose other children are all in school or college nearby, echoed this: "It's just a mass recreation program to keep them all busy."

People in Lakewood often mentioned to me how much there was going on in the area. There were the batting cages. There was bowling. There were many movies around. There was, nearby in Downey, the campaign to preserve the nation's last operating original McDonald's, a relic of 1953 at the corner of Lakewood Boulevard and Florence Avenue. "If they're going to tear this down, they might as well tell Clinton please take your business to Taco Bell," one observer told the *Press-Telegram.* And there was, always, the mall, Lakewood Center, the actual and figurative center of town. During the days I spent in Lakewood, I had occasion to visit the mall now and then, and each time I found it moderately busy, the fact that its sales figures have decreased every quarter since 1990 notwithstanding. There was a reflecting pool, a merry-go-round, a Burger King, a McDonald's, if not an original McDonald's. There was a booth offering free information on prescriptions. There was another displaying photographs of houses for sale. I said to a woman leafing through the listings that I had not before seen houses for sale in a mall. "H.U.D. and V.A. repos," she said.



One day at the mall, I went into Bullock's, which, because it was about to close its doors for good, was in the process of selling everything in the store at thirty-five per cent off the ticket price. There were women systematically defoliating the racks in the menswear department, women dropping discards and hangers in tangles on the floor, women apparently undiscouraged by the scrawled sign warning that register lines were "currently in excess of 3+ hours long," women who had already staked out positions for the wait, women curled with their children on the floor, women who had bulwarked their positions with forts of quilts, comforters, bedspreads, mattress pads, Cuisinarts, coffeemakers, sandwich grills, Juice Tigers, and Heart Wafflers. The clerks and security officers monitoring the register lines were men.

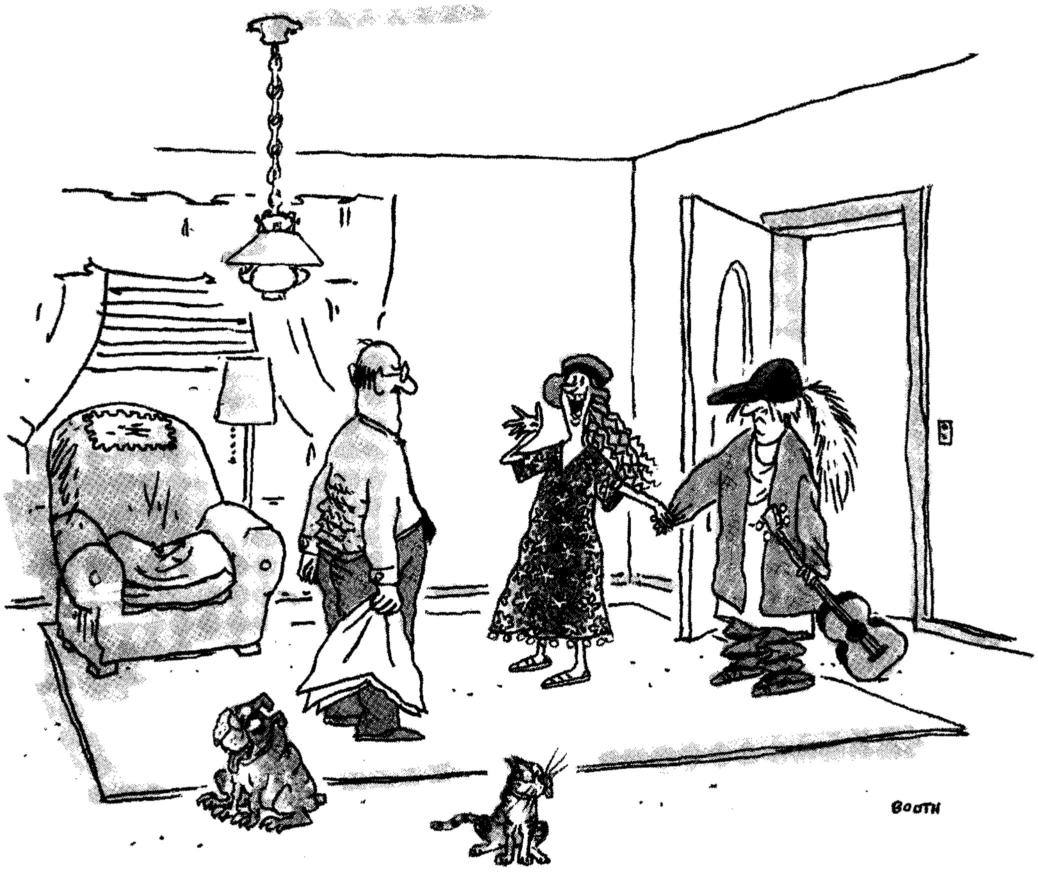
LAKEWOOD exists because at a given time in a different economy it seemed an efficient idea to provide population density for the mall and a labor pool for the Douglas plant. There are a lot of places like Lakewood in California. They were California's mill towns, breeder towns for the boom. When times were good and there was money to spread around, these were the towns that proved Marx wrong, that managed to increase the proletariat and simultaneously, by calling it middle class, to co-opt it. Such towns were organized around the sedative idealization of team sports, which were believed to develop "good citizens," and therefore tended toward the idealization of adolescent males. During the good years, the years for which places like Lakewood and Canoga Park and El Segundo and Pico Rivera existed, the preferred resident was in fact an adolescent or postadolescent male, ideally one already married and mortgaged, in harness to the plant, a good worker, a steady consumer, a team player, someone who played ball, a good citizen.

When towns like these came on hard times, it was their adolescent males, only recently the community's most valued asset, who were most visibly left with nowhere to go. Among the Spur Posse members who appeared on the talk shows this spring, a striking number had been out of high school a year, or even two years, but did not seem actively engaged in a next step. "It was some of the older kids who were so obnoxious, so arrogant," Donald Belman told me. "They're the ones who were setting up talk-show appearances just for the money. I had to kick them out of my house, they were answering my phone, monitoring my mail. They were just in it for the money, quick cash." Jane Gross, of the New York *Times,* asked one postgraduate Spur what he had been doing since high school. "Partying," he said. "Playing ball."

Good citizens were encouraged, when partying failed, when playing ball failed, when they finally noticed that the jobs had gone to Tucson, to see their problem as one caused by "the media," or by "condoms in the schools," or by less good citizens, or non-citizens. This year, the California State Legislature has undertaken consideration of twenty different pieces of legislation intended to limit or punish immigration, most of them exclusively symbolic, some tending toward a result counter to that intended.

Energetic enforcement of the proposed Assembly Bill 86, for example, which would make it a state crime to be in California illegally (first offense a misdemeanor, second a felony), would logically result in full taxpayer support, via the already burdened criminal-justice system, of all California illegals, who are estimated to number two million.

"Orange County is using illegal aliens now as a smoke screen, as a scapegoat, because that way we get the white lower-income people to jump on board and say the immigrants are the problem," the wife of an aerospace engineer in Orange County recently told Robert Scheer, of the Los Angeles *Times*. "But we had our class differences before the immigrants. One of our sons was on the football team in the high school in Costa Mesa about twelve years ago. They had a great team and they were beating the pants off one of the schools in Newport Beach and the Newport stands started to cheer, 'Hey, hey, that's OK, you're gonna work for us one day.' "



"Daddy, this is Fletcher—unplugged."

• •

THIS was a sullen spring in Lakewood. In April, about the time the Lakewood Center Bullock's was selling the last of its Heart Wafflers, the ten-year-old girl who said that she had been assaulted by a Spur Posse member gave her first press conference, in Gloria Allred's office. Her mother had been seen, on "Donahue," "The Home Show," and "20/20," but the child, now eleven, had not. "I have been upset because I wanted to be on TV," she said at her press conference. "To show how I feel. I wanted to say it for myself." Also in April, Spur Posse members approached various talent agencies, trying to sell their story for a television movie. An I.C.M. agent asked these Spurs if they were not concerned about how they might be presented. Their concern, they told him, was how much money they would make. I.C.M. declined to represent the Spurs, as did, it was later reported, C.A.A., United Talent Agency, and William Morris.

It was also in April that Teamsters Local 692 went on strike at the Douglas plant, over the issue of whether or not Douglas could contract out work previously done by union members. "They can't do that to people after 27 years," the wife of one driver, for whom the new contract would mean a cut from eighty thousand dollars a year to thirty-five thousand dollars, told the *Press-Telegram*. "It's just not right." It was in April, too, that Finnair disclosed discussions about a switch from its mostly Douglas fleet to buying Boeing. It was in May that Continental, just out of bankruptcy reorganization, ordered ninety-two new planes, with options for ninety-eight more, all from Boeing.

In a town where it is possible to hear, unprompted, a spirited defense of the DC-10 ("Very quiet plane," John Todd told me, "nice-flying plane, compared with those Boeings and those other airplanes, it makes about half as much noise"), the involvement with Douglas goes deeper than mere dependence. People in Lakewood have defined their lives as Douglas. I had lunch one day with a 1966 graduate of Lakewood High who had later spent time in the Peace Corps. It seemed that, somewhere in the heart of Africa, he had hopped a ride on a DC-3. The DC-3 had a plate indicating that it had come off the Long Beach line, and he had thought, There it is. I've come as far as I can go and it's still Douglas. "It's a town on the plantation model," he said to me at lunch. "Douglas being the big house."

"They're history," an aircraft-industry executive said in April to the Washington *Post*. Don E. Newquist, the chairman of the International Trade Commission, said, at a hearing on commercial-aerospace competitiveness, "I see a company going out of business, barring some miracle." Each was talking about Douglas, and, by extension, about the plant on the Lakewood city line, the plant with the flag and the forward-slanted logo and the MD-11s parked like cars and the motel with the marquee that still reads "WELCOME DOUGLAS HAPPY HOUR 4-7." Douglas itself was reported to be talking to possible Asian partners about moving at least some production to Asia, but would say about these talks only that they had reached a "mature" stage. "It's like a lifetime thing," one Lakewood High graduate had said on "Jane Whitney" about the Spur Posse. "We're all going to be friends for life, you know." ♦

THE SPORTING SCENE

THE HEAT OF WIMBLEDON

The hard-baked lawns of the All England Club provided spectators with a surprising glimpse of the stars of tennis, now heading for Flushing Meadow, as they battled the unexpected.

BY MARTIN AMIS / DRAWINGS BY GERALD SCARFE

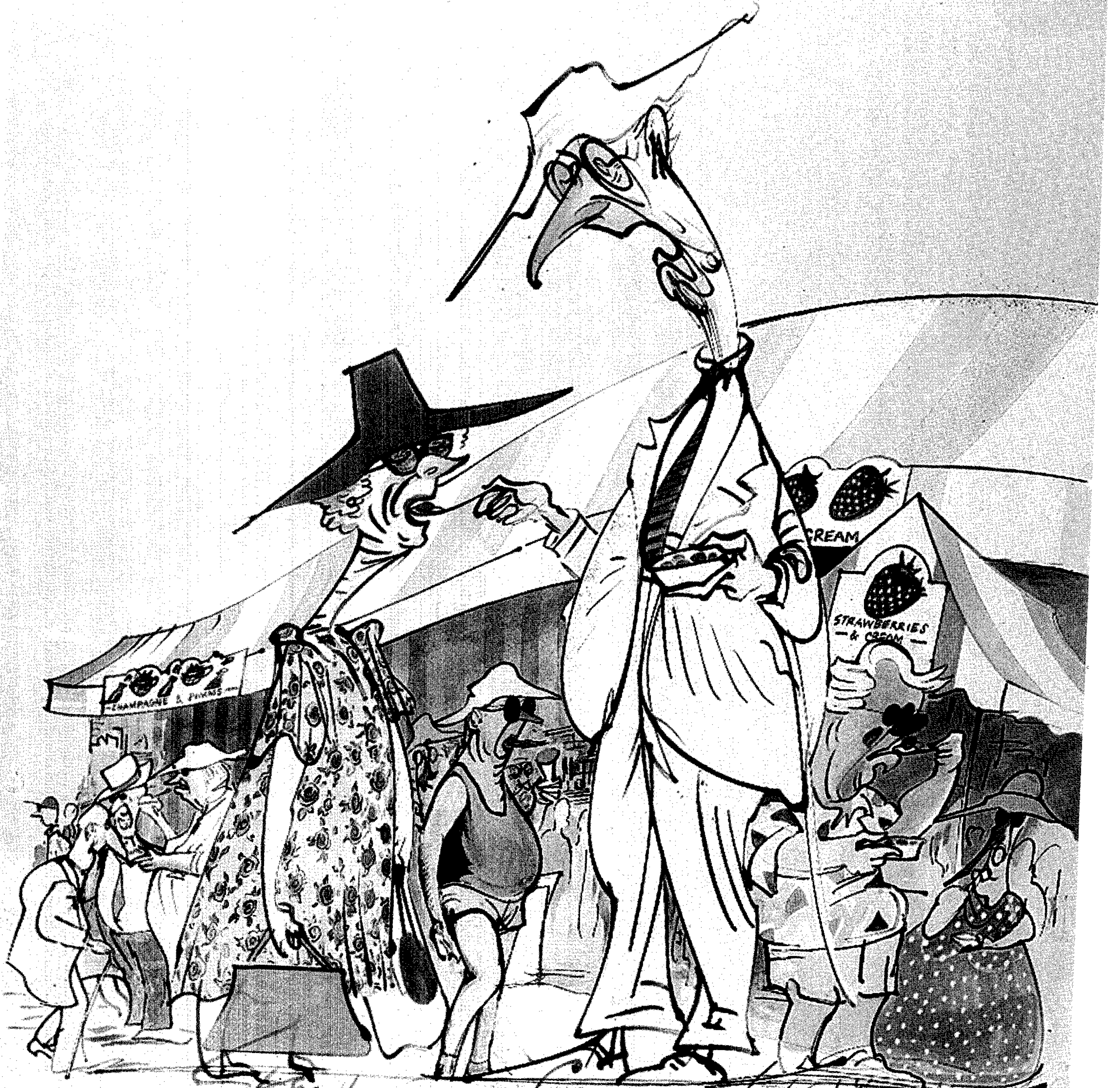
JIM COURIER may not be the world's No. 1 tennis player (for the time being), but he is still the world's No. 1 perspirer. No pretenders to that crown: Jim outsweats every other male on the planet. This, surely, is the image we all have of Courier: after an amazing winner on a monster point, he will turn, instantly and expressionlessly, and extend a dripping forefinger toward the ball boy who bears the heavy responsibility of coping with the Courier towel. Then, as he waits, he gives his face the double wipe, backhand and forehand, with the steeped sweatband. Jim's inner-game face, so "focussed" that it looks cross-eyed or cyclopic, is perfect for deep sweating: the glaze of those eyes is nothing to the glaze of those cheeks, that forehead, that upper lip. His skin looks like the window of a fish-and-chips shop, or like a new couch from which the manufacturer's polyethylene has yet to be removed. Courier is saturated in concentration. It will eventually become clear that I mean no disrespect when I say that Jim's game is based on sweat. Some players trust their wrists, their knees, their body-swivel, their back-bend. When push comes to shove, Courier looks to his armpits.

If you want to see him really sweat up a storm, you should catch Jim at Flinders Park, Melbourne, or at Flushing Meadow, Queens, where the umpires always seem to be on the verge of saying, "Fifteen-love: Courier. New towels, please." At these venues, Courier appears to be capable of clinching a third world title: best at tennis, best at sweating, and best at getting incredibly red in the face. At Melbourne in 1992, Stefan Edberg called Courier "a hard worker." This was, I thought, startlingly ungenerous, coming from the diffident Edberg. I suppose certain other players would have made their meaning even clearer: short on talent, Courier was just a maniacal grafter. Courier went on to do Edberg in the final, 6–3, 3–6, 6–4, 6–2. Andre Agassi repeated and elaborated the charge at the French Open of the same year, depicting himself as a poet and dreamer of the court, in contrast to the Courier regime of dumbbells and percentages. Courier did *him* in the quarters, 6–3, 6–7, 6–1, 6–4. Words were exchanged when the two men shook hands at the net. Agassi had his back to the camera, but you could read Courier's lips. What they said, measuredly, was "Thanks, man." So Andre, as usual, had been voluble in affront but was also voluble in apology and praise. This is why we like Agassi, humanly. He is a mistake-maker. He goes too far in all directions.

As an arena for lavish perspiration, Wimbledon cannot normally compete with Flinders Park and Flushing Meadow (and neither can Roland Garros, where in this year's final of the French Open Courier lost in five to the maddening heavy-topspin forehand of Sergi Bruguera). But Wimbledon was hot in 1993—hotter than it's been for almost two decades. The sun baked the turf into a surface that imitated cement. At the start of the tournament, the ball was shooting away at knee height, as it will do on grass; but by quarter-final day it was sitting up, like a dog begging for scraps, around the midriff, where Courier likes it. In accounting for his great run at Wimbledon, Courier should thank God, as they all do anyway these days. And he should repeat his words of laconic gratitude to Andre Agassi: for giving him faith—for showing that even in the modern era, even in the Graphite Age, you can win on grass from the back of the court. Courier looked rapturous at Wimbledon this year. He looked childishly happy; he looked drugged. No one expected him to do well. It wasn't like the other Slams, where he had all those ranking points to defend. He said he looked forward to "a fun final" against Pete Sampras. A fun *final*? Wimbledon won't be fun for Jim in 1994, because—given a net cord here, a mis-hit there—he knows he can win it.

Last year, Andre Agassi won Wimbledon from the back of the court. This wasn't meant to happen ever again after 1982, when Jimmy Connors last did it—in five sets, against the wooden racquet of John McEnroe. Since then, it's been serve-and-volleyers all the way: not Vilas, not Wilander, not Lendl; certainly not Andres Gomez or Sergi Bruguera. The reason for this is simply the way the ball behaves when it hits the turf. There is no more telling contrast in the sport than the bounce at Roland Garros and the bounce—a fortnight later—at Wimbledon. Since Björn Borg in 1980, nobody has won both. (McEnroe came close; he was a set away, with a two-set cushion.) On grass, the ball doesn't sit up; the ball slides or shoots—the ball is *gone*. During an average rally, which consists of serve, return, and volley putaway, the ball makes only one "live" contact with the ground. Yet this split second determines the entire game plan. So: you hold your own serve, coming in on everything, and hope to break your opponent once per set. (On grass, the pros say, break points are like set points.) And how do you break? Well, the Becker method is—or was—as follows: You psych yourself into giving four returns of hysterical brilliance, in succession.

Nothing was stranger in 1992 than to see Agassi deliver his first serve—and *stay put*. In the final, against Goran Ivanisevic, who served over two hundred aces in the tournament, you couldn't believe how hard Agassi was going to have

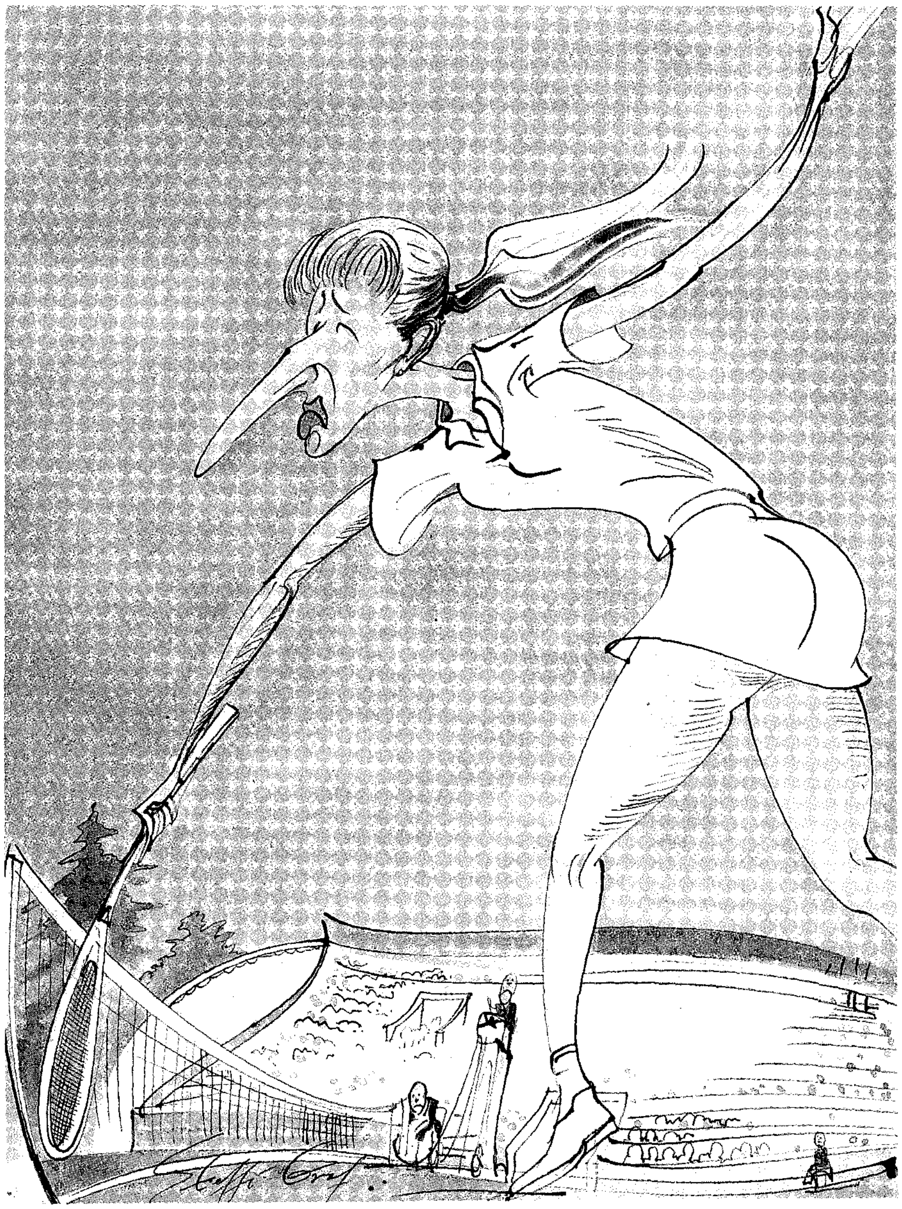

CHAMPAGNE & PIMMS
CREAM
STRAWBERRIES & CREAM

Strawberries and Cream — Wimbledon 95

to work. He would be obliged to rally for every point—on grass, where the service game aspires to the condition of a formality. Agassi has never played the Australian Open, which is disputed on a surface designed to give equal chances to the serve-and-volleyer and the baseliner. The surface is called Rebound Ace, which is also a good description of Agassi's Wimbledon strategy. His idea was to channel the server's speed into his own return, directed not wide but right at the server, and low; from the server's defensive volley he would then produce the pass (or the disguised topspin lob). Unbelievably, and perhaps unrepeatably, it worked. Ion Tiriac was right when he said that Agassi should be hired by NASA, because he had rewritten the laws of ballistics.

Pete Sampras's father was *already* an aerospace engineer. This was an omen.

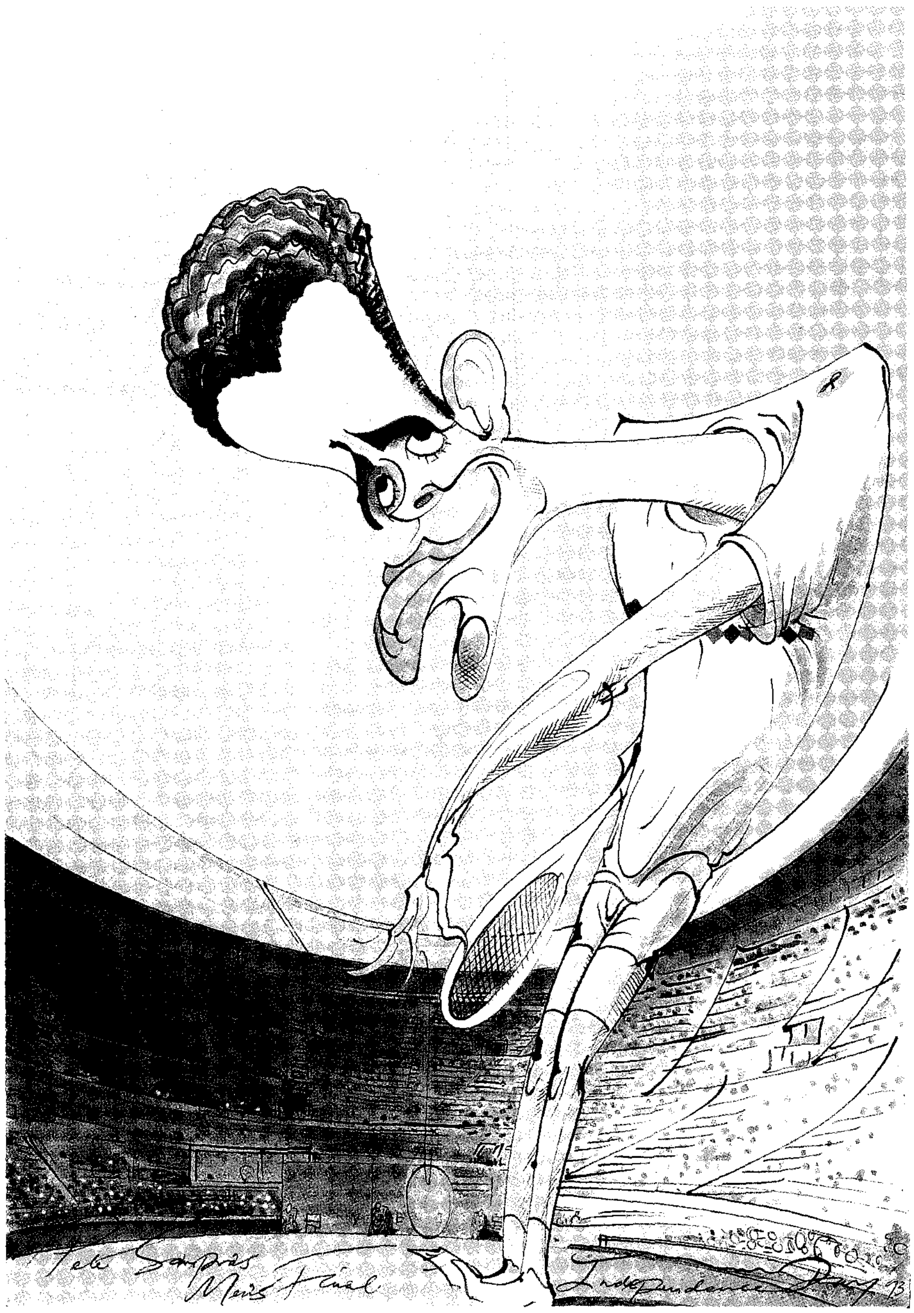
THE All England Club, halfway through the first week: Edberg is on Centre Court—fluid, coiffed, embarrassingly well proportioned—and giving a relaxed display against Amos Mansdorf, who once took him to five sets here but will not do so today. Lendl is on Court One, both haunted and spectral, like Franz Kafka with muscle tone. Wimbledon has brought Lendl nothing but agony and grief; he comes to the net as if well bribed to do so; he is being beaten, in the second round, by the pert Frenchman Arnaud Boetsch. At the cost of a fine, Lendl will drive from the grounds in his courtesy car without attending the post-match conference. You step out from one of these crucibles onto the players' balcony, and there is the Tennis Club, in its oblongs of pastoral green, under the bower of foliage that frames the view. Eighteen grass courts, all in action: men's singles, women's singles, men's doubles, women's doubles, mixed doubles. The usual logistical nightmare—rain, and then more rain—vanishes in the light of a sunny day.



Non-British players, and particularly Americans, talk of Wimbledon in terms of dignity, refinement, tradition—class, in a word. You don't really want to tell them that to a Londoner the whole area is a synonym for petit-bourgeois Babbittry, duff protocol, and tweedy gentility. Still, here are the shining courts, with Michael Chang to your right, David Wheaton to your left, and Wayne Ferreira directly below, like a public park in Elysium. The edging, inching crowds look innocuously suburban: at the All England Club, as in all England, tennis is a polite enthusiasm. When Ferreira furiously slam-dunks the ball out of the court, a young woman in the concourse retrieves it, or what's left of it, and *throws it back.* Jennifer Capriati, paying her first visit to Wimbledon, aged fourteen, talked on television about curtsying "to Princess Fergie" in the Royal Box. The interviewer pointed out that Fergie was a duchess, not a princess. For a moment, Jennifer's face went ajar with terror. She must have thought she was going to be dragged off to the Tower of London and decapitated by the Beefeaters. But it really isn't like that here.

The women's game at present is dominated by an absence. Monica Seles has skipped Wimbledon before; and she has never won it. Her game is Courier-like (backcourt power, plus insatiable hunger), but she needs no encouragement from Andre Agassi. The only woman still on the tour who loves the net, as the sadist loves the lash, is Martina Navratilova. Why do the ladies hate the forecourt? Because their reaction time for the shot is roughly halved? Often, they won't go in even at those moments when *any* man—any talentless park toiler—goes in, instinctively: the opponent scrambling back for a lob, the opponent spread-eagled in the tramlines. The ferocious Seles herself shuns the forecourt, unless lured there by a drop shot. I feel that it has to do with a feminine sense of fair play (of course you'll win the point, they seem to say, if you hit it from *there*) and an ingrained distaste for assertiveness. Some think it ungallant or inequitable to talk about the differences between the men's and the women's games. But to deny these differences is to turn away from obvious human truths.

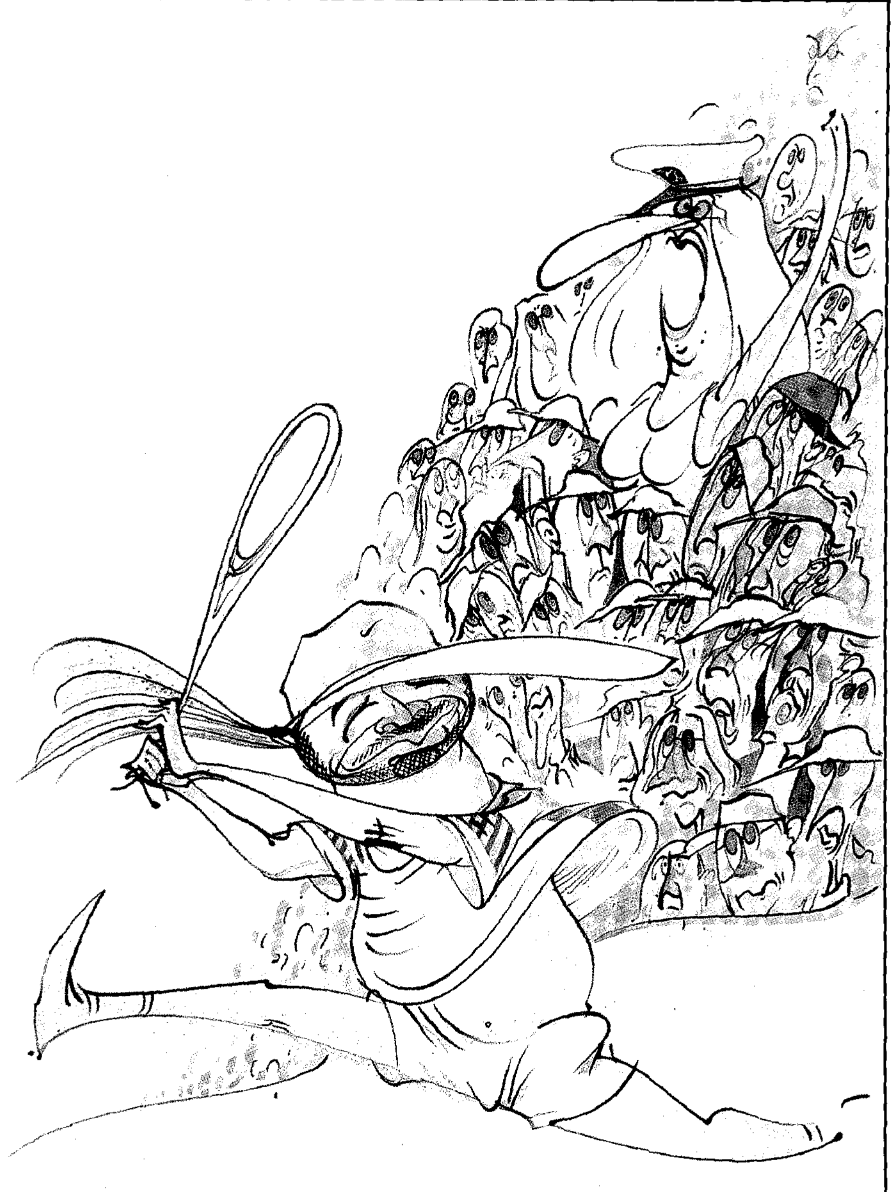
For instance, how many men store the second-serve ball in their underpants, as do Jennifer Capriati and Natalia Zvereva? That's an old habit, but there are new ones, too. A spontaneous underlining of gender difference has recently manifested itself in the end-of-match handshake: nowadays (if they like each other), the women kiss at the net, and the men (if they like each other) spurn the standard palm-press for the more up-front and macho thumb-grasp. Men wear shorts. Women (Martina excepted) wear skirts. And so on. But the essential difference is the nature of the desire. Men want to win: money, will, strength, ranking. Women want to *have* won, attractively. Look at Jana Novotna—pale, melancholy, artistic Jana. During the quarters (Sabatini) and the semis (Navratilova), she became marvellously vivid, only to swoon away from victory (a service point for 5–1 in the third) against a ragged Steffi Graf in the final. It wasn't that Jana stopped hitting winners, or hitting hard, or hitting deep. She stopped hitting the ball into the tennis court. Then, her face stretched in desolation, she wept in the arms of the Duchess of Kent. Try to imagine Jim Courier having a refreshing weep in the arms of the Duke. Victory goes to the man who wants it more. Victory goes to the woman who fears it less. The men sweat and swear and howl and scowl, and flail at the umpire with their lumbering sarcasms. The women frown and shrug, and get on with the game.



Monica Seles skipped Wimbledon in 1991 because of injury (or breakdown, or pregnancy, depending on your tabloid). She skipped it in 1993 because she was stabbed in the back, on court, during a changeover, at a tournament in Hamburg this spring. She was stabbed because her assailant, a German, wanted to pave the way for Steffi Graf's return to the No. 1 spot. With Steffi, at least, there is only one player to incapacitate, so we should be grateful that the man with the knife was not a follower of Luciana Corsato-Owsianka or Linda Niemantsverdriet, ranked 429 and 194, respectively. The prognosis for Monica remains unclear. Tennis fans are probably tired of hearing how "mental" the game is supposed to be; but it's here that we find the lasting threat to Monica. It was said of her when she was a prodigy that she "*loved* the ball." Club players should think about this: about how their own affection for the ball has never been great; they don't want it back. Monica wanted it back so that she could hit it again. Henceforth that appetite will always have something queasy in it: the memory of shock and pain, of something atrociously inordinate.

Meanwhile, every loner and babbler and free-falling obsessive will look to the ladies to see if any of them speak to him in strange and dangerous ways. During the first week at Wimbledon, a German stalking Steffi Graf had to be expelled. The German Anke Huber told of *her* German stalker, who followed her all the way to the Australian Open and once gave her some satin underwear "as a sign of love." Lest we run away with the idea that stalking is an exclusively German activity, Chris Evert revealed that she once had a stalker, too: he broke into her place in Boca Raton while she was at Wimbledon and slept in her closet. Then there is the case of the Canadian Mary Pierce, the expressive and elegant top-twenty player, who is stalked by her own father. Jim Pierce is now banned from all events on the 1993 women's tour. There was an occasion, seven years ago, when Mr. Pierce approached a twelve-year-old girl who had just beaten his daughter in a junior tournament. The girl recalls: "He said, like, 'You're a fucking, shitty scumbag and you're never going to amount to anything,' and 'You only beat my daughter because you got lucky. You're a piece of shit.' And then he came toward me like he was going to hit me, and I took off." Here in hyperbolic overspill we see the energies of the men's game, pathetically deranged and displaced, with no net, no lines, and no umpire.

What determines a spectator's sympathies? This is an old question but an increasingly urgent one. Why do we like certain players and dislike others, often passionately and vehemently? We are responding, I think, to their body language on the court. It is, crucially, a physical matter. How many times have you settled down to watch a match, with a firm hope and a firm favorite, to find after half an hour that your disposition has changed? You assume it's a change of mind. Not so: it's a change of body. The body decides—in response to the players' bodies. This sounds sexual, doesn't it? Unquestionably, the libido is implicated. Ask the girls who root for Agassi with their tinny, teeny, rock-world shrieks. Ask the stalker.



Barbra Streisand encourages her friend Andre Agassi
Gerald Scarfe

WE hear a lot of talk about the absence of "personalities" in modern tennis, the talk coming mostly from supposed personalities of yesteryear, like Connors and Ilie Nastase. Current demand for emotional extras, for jerk comedy and jerk rage, for something assimilable that you can bond with, is flimflam—and mischievous flimflam, because it[illegible] part of the process that leads to the stalker poring over his tabloid, in which he hopes to make headlines one day soon. A tennis player has no need to express his personality. His personality is expressed by his tennis game.

To see Courier and Sampras on Centre Court was to see a dramatic opposition of will and talent: to see what Courier had given to get as good as he is, and to see, more simply, what Sampras had been given by God. (Refreshingly, neither player is *especially* religious, unlike Chang, Wheaton, Agassi, and, of all people, Nick Bolletieri.) It is axiomatic in sports that great natural gifts entail fragility of spirit. When the Ferrari of talent isn't firing, its owner won't walk it or get his hands dirty: he'll leave the road. Sampras's quarter-final with Agassi had the self-explanatory scoreline 6–2, 6–2, 3–6, 3–6, 6–4: a far bigger win than his straight-sets semi with Becker (who just looks too slow now, as if he needed sheer youth, something calflike, to whip that bulk around). In the end, in the final, Sampras relied on the classical prerogative of grass: speed. Speed of eye, hand, foot, and racquet head, and speed of thought. Intransigence and preternatural concentration will win tournaments on clay, but grass is the surface of instinct. Sampras moved like an alley cat, whereas Courier, for all his heart-bursting ardor, was charging about on rails, upending dustbins.

The London press, disoriented by some British successes in the first week, dismissed the final, and the finalists, as "b[illegible]ing." Anyone who gets bored watching Sampras on a tennis court should find another sport to follow. As for Courier, it isn't just the carpet-beating forehand (the biggest shot in the game), the court coverage, the frenzied gets, the staying power, the hampers of sopping towels. Courier has constructed a competitive self that offers no forgiveness. Just the ballplayer's animal severity. And he'll be back. ♦

FICTION

BAD FORM

BY AMY BLOOM

I FEEL my baby's arms around my neck. Hidden wrists, flesh the color and feel of white tea roses, the rising scent of warm corn bread. I wake up and find the pillow twisted beneath my chin, a few strands of my hair caught in the pillowcase zipper. Marc hears me or feels me beginning to cry and wards it off as best he can.

"Gotta piss," he says, and he smooths the covers down as if to soothe his side of the bed.

I rock the pillow and reach for a Prozac and the glass of water on the nightstand. My whole house is decorated by an invalid: boxes of tissues, half-drawn curtains, sweaty nightgowns, aspirin, marjoram shower gel (guaranteed by Marc's New Age secretary to "lift your spirits"), fading plants. I do not understand why death inspires people to give greenery.

Marc comes back to bed, and I am kind enough to pretend that I'm asleep. If I were awake, he would have to comfort me. The circles under his eyes darken and crease the skin down to his cheekbones. Why should either of us have to endure his comforting me? He puts his hand on my hip, as if to balance himself, but I know he's checking. Am I twitching, am I sweating, are my shoulders heaving? He's a good man; he will avoid me only once. Having got off the hook earlier, he is compelled to be attentive. I sound like I hate him, which I don't.

I do fantasize about his death, however. I strangle him with the umbilical cord, the blue-pink twist they took off Saul's little no-neck. The doctor, my own obstetrician—a perfectly pleasant, competent woman, a Democrat who sits with me on the boards of two good causes—is perforated by the smallest, sharpest scalpels, as in an old-fashioned knife-throwing show, until she is pinned to the wall of the operating room in pieces, her lips still moving, apologizing, but not so profusely that I might think she was *at fault* and sue her for malpractice or wrongful death or whatever it is that my brother-in-law told us we could sue for. My wrongful life, my dying marriage, how about the house plants and the students I don't give a damn about? For the nurses and the interne who assisted Mary Lou, I use dull scalpels, and I stick them with horse-size epidural needles when they try to escape.

I made an attempt to go back to my office three weeks ago. I picked up my mail and was doing fine, ignoring the silences and the sotto-voce inquiries, which practically screamed "Better-you-than-me." Martha, our department secretary—old, frightened, useless since we all got computers—handed me my messages and a stack of departmental memos. Her ancient poodle was wheezing on his little bed beneath her desk.

"Your shirt . . ." she said, and I looked down at the wet blue circles and left.

I sat in the ladies room, pressing my breasts, kneading my shirt and my bra until tiny white tears dripped onto my fingers. I left my mail on the floor, and someone sent it to me anonymously, with kind intentions, two days later.

I GO back again, braced with a Percodan-Prozac cocktail, which you will not find in the Physician's Desk Reference. Information about an M.L.A. conference I seem to have organized in Edinburgh is coming through on the department fax. The man faxing me is very excited, and his words leap about on the cheap, oily paper. He is expecting a draft of my presentation in two weeks and me in four. I don't think so. I tell Martha to fax him back that I will not attend and that I will not send the notes for my talk.

She is concerned. I treat Martha the way my mother taught me to treat our domestic servants. I am gracious and reasonable and accommodating. She adores me (and appreciates her annual Westminster dog show tickets), and the faculty Marxists (former Marxists—I don't know what they do with themselves now) gnash their teeth over us. Martha hesitates. It cannot be good for me professionally to cancel at this late date. Perhaps I will not be asked to chair a panel again soon. Perhaps my reputation at the university will diminish and Martha's office status will go from endangered to extinct. I fax the message myself: "Cannot come. Baby dead. Maybe next year. Onora O'Connor."

A girl is waiting for me in the hall. I don't mind girls too much, and I can even feel sorry for them, since I know what's in store for them and they don't. When I was her age, I'd look at women like me with just that same disgusted disbelief. Their stomachs billowed out, their asses dragged, their hair hung in limp strands or was sprayed up into alien shapes. Why did they do that to themselves? They must all have been ugly girls and never recovered. But I was not an ugly girl, I put this young thing in the shade when I was her age. I did art modelling for tuition money—the servants were a phase, not a life style—and loved it. My body defied gravity, defined lush perfection. Peach juice would run out if I was bitten. I was fucking perfect for three years of my life and not too shabby until the recent past.

I signed her forms, promised her she could be in my Auden seminar come fall, and escaped, feeling like a check bouncer in a mom-and-pop grocery. Sure, here's my address, watch me record the amount, like it matters. There's nothing in the bank. I am no more going to teach in the fall than play third base for the Yankees.

I leave the building, passing clusters of women. I hate them all, I don't even see the men. When I hear or smell babies coming, I leave the room. These women, all these women, are pregnant, or will be, or have been, or don't want to be, or have suffered some made-for-TV disaster like mine. It doesn't matter; whether they are like me or lucky, I hate them, and I seem to make it pretty clear, because they turn just a little, feet unmoving while their hips shift, and I cannot join them without barging in.

I FIND a woman sitting in my kitchen, not obviously pregnant but she might be—she could let it drop in the middle of our conversation or else make a *huge* effort and not say anything at all, so Marc can struggle with telling me privately. I wonder if he's sleeping with her, but I can't imagine it. He looks as bad as I do. Every time he shaves he nicks another spot; his whole face is lightly gouged, as if he'd been rather listlessly assaulted. There are four deep-green rows of wine bottles on our kitchen counter. Marc has been steadily working through cases of California merlot and zinfandel.

"I'm Susan? From the Neonate Program at the hospital? Memorial Unit 3?" She goes on talking, but I'm stuck. Doesn't she know who she is? Is she asking *me*? Does she think I've forgotten the floor name? Does she think I remember her? Marc is nodding, with tears in his eyes. She must be talking about Saul.

" . . . that you might be interested in . . . "

"What?"

She sighs, just a little bit—I should appreciate how patient and understanding she's being. Do I look like I give a fuck? You, do you think I can even smell you without wanting to puke? I may start puking if she doesn't leave soon. Hormones, medication, lots of obvious explanations for my sudden vomiting. I measure the distance to the kitchen sink and figure whether I could easily hit her shoes as well. She's still talking, and Marc has put his hand on my shoulder. Saul is definitely the subject.

" . . . your loss. I worked with one woman who went through this experience, and I think she found it very helpful. So I mentioned it to your husband."

"What?"

"The Pediatric Volunteer Program. After orientation, you spend time with children on the unit until they go home."

"Or die."

Susan looks at Marc, who is no longer resting his hand on my shoulder in a display of emotional support. He cradles his face in his left hand, rolling a wet cork across the table with his right index finger.

"Oh, no, you don't spend time with terminally ill children. Our volunteers visit with the children recovering from surgery, getting fitted for prostheses, things like that. Not terminal cases."

I can see her thoughts through a suddenly opened window in her forehead. Jesus, she's thinking, this woman is clearly not suitable for any kind of program, how do I leave without upsetting her? The transparent patch in Susan's forehead is a product of sleep deprivation, as Mary Lou has already explained to Marc and me. The moments when Saul, at various ages, comes to me and weeps in my arms, the tendency to see people's words as they say them and sometimes when they don't, the sensation that objects are only two-dimensional—these are typical symptoms of sleep deprivation. Not to worry.

"I'll think about it. Why don't you leave your card. Thanks for coming. Goodbye." I think this comes out pretty well, but I can see from her face that I have left out something key, like inflection. Too bad. If she wants affect, she can talk to Marc. I go upstairs and lie down with my shoes on (but my soles don't touch the bedspread—I'm not that far gone) until I hear the front door close.

Another agonizing evening with the O'Connor-Schwartzes begins. Marc is solicitous, then hurt, then apologetic, then furious, then guilty, then back to the beginning, then exhausted. He usually falls asleep between guilt and the third bottle of wine.

I cannot kill myself—we do not commit that sin; it is *such* bad form—but I find myself teetering at the stair landings, walking quickly on the narrow, slick marble steps of the library, seeing how long I can keep my hands off the steering wheel. Come and get me.

THIS is not a hospital ward, it is the Hieronymus Bosch Pediatric Purgatory. I have been told to wait with the other child lovers shuffling along in pastel sweatsuits and massive sneakers or two-hundred-dollar cardigans thrown over jeans and posy-covered turtlenecks. Apparently, only women are in need of this kind of entertainment. As we go through the halls of gasping infants, and toddlers with metal shunts sticking out of their heads, and older children playing tag with their I.V.s, I notice that my little group is more varied than I thought. Two of the six look late-middle-aged, and their expressions are of pleasant concern and universal affection. Two others are quite young, very Junior League, and if they have lost babies they've been spending quite a bit of time in the gym ever since. The woman right next to me is black, meaning the color of strong coffee, and *her* expression, at least, is familiar to me. She looks enraged and terrified, and when she sees a nurse her lips curl up and back, revealing wonderfully pointed incisors. When we are seated for orientation, in a windowless room with firmly cushioned chairs and love seats, I perch on the edge of a table, and the little nurse leading the group knows enough not to encourage me to join the circle. She asks what each of us hopes to get out of this program, and the others say whatever they say, and the black woman and I snarl and look away. Even I, with my impaired judgment, cannot believe that they're going to let people like us have contact with helpless children. Then she asks if we have preferences about the kids we spend time with. The others say prettily that it really doesn't matter. The she-wolf says, "Not a black child," and I say nothing at all.

I ask for a little time to get acclimated, and the nurse lets me trespass quietly, unsupervised. All the children I see are engaged. They are being fed and held, or being sung to as their dressings are changed. They cry out as their scarlet stumpy parts are washed and rewrapped, but not for too long. When the nurses and aides see me watching, they scowl or smile quickly; visitors are not much help. Some of the rooms are overflowing with Mylar balloons, photo-filled bulletin boards, parents, toys, comic books. I am looking for a room with nothing but a kid and a cot.

He is there, at the end of the hall. He comes out of his room to greet me in a state-of-the-art wheelchair, its front built up like a combination keyboard and portable desk. He holds a silver stick in his mouth and presses the keys on the console with it. We watch each other. He is ugly, not at all what Saul would have been. Sallow, greasy little rat face, buzz-cut black hair, stick-out ears. As he bends over the console, I see the back of his thin, hairy neck.

"Hey," he says, letting go of the stick. I thought he couldn't be more than three, but no toddler could speak like that—as if he'd been living on the streets for fifteen years and this hospital was just one more dead-end job.

"Hey, yourself." I'm blushing.

"Could you move?"

I flatten myself against the wall, and

he rolls past, stick pressed hard to the flat orange disk in a row of concave blue buttons. The wheelchair has tires fit for a pickup truck, and the sides go up to his neck like a black box. I look down as the whole thing lumbers past. Under his little T-shirt he has no arms.

"Bye," I say.

"Yeah."

I cannot befriend the nurse at the front desk, but I do persuade her to tell me about him. Jorge. His story is horror upon unending horror—proof, not that I needed it, that the thought of a God is even more frightening than a world without one. Nobody is coming to take him home. He is not considered lovable, and the occasional saints—the foster parents who take in the AIDS babies and the cancer-ridden children—don't want him. What does he like, I ask the nurse. Nothing, she says. Whatever he likes, he's been keeping it to himself.

I wait by his room. He will not show his pleasure, but he will be reluctantly, helplessly pleased. Who has ever come back for a second, nonclinical look?

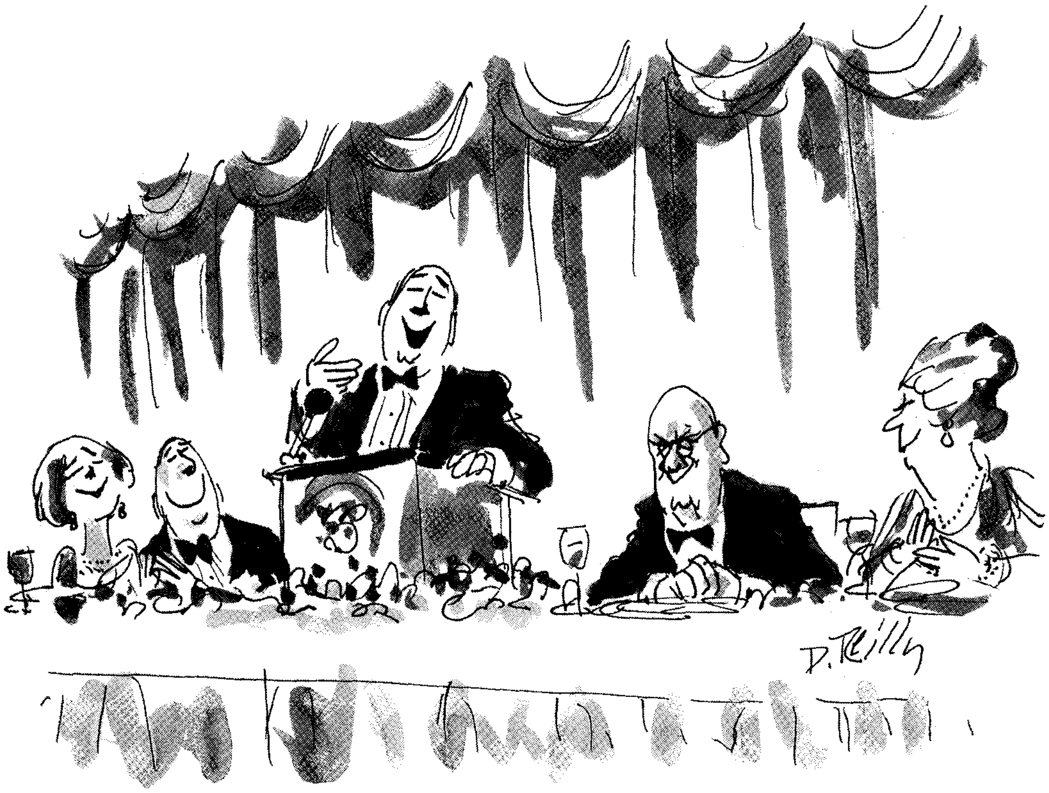
"Gum?"

"What kind?"

"Bubble Yum. Mint or grape." It *is* what I chew.

"Grape." He opens his mouth, and I unwrap the gum and place it on his white-coated tongue. He chews away, and then purses his lips around his joystick and moves off. At the end of the hall, he sits up and looks over his shoulder at me. He tongues the stick aside, keeping the blue gum in.

I wave. "See you tomorrow, Jorge."



"And, finally, I know I speak for everyone when I say that if we could clone him we would."

AT home, I prepare for diplomacy and war. I shower, even using the marjoram gel. My spirits *are* lifted. I make Julia Child brisket and arrange a pretty salad. I open a bottle of Stag's Leap and use the big-bowled wineglasses, the ones I have to wash by hand.

I tell Marc about him, lying. I make him sound sweet, responsive, appreciative. I don't tell the story the nurse told me: how he spat in the face of an aide, saving up a mouthful of penicillin to do so. I don't mention his all-over ugliness, the gooey squint in his right eye, the slight fecal odor surrounding him. I might as well have told Marc the truth. No, he says, we cannot take a disabled child right now.

We? I have to laugh. That old joke: What do you mean "we," white man? I pick over the words in my mind, to get him to say yes, and then I don't care.

"I'm bringing him home if they let me. He doesn't have to be in the hospital, but his family can't care for him, and his needs are too much for a residential place." Of course they'll let me. It must cost a fortune to keep him. And he's so ugly.

"If you bring him home, I don't know. . . I don't think I can stay. Please don't do this to us."

AN aide is bringing Jorge off the elevator, and they both stare at me in surprise. I open my briefcase slowly, making a show of the tight buckles, as Jorge approaches. I can hear the warm, sticky roll of the tires on the linoleum floor. We'll have to pull up the guest-room carpeting.

"Gum?" he says.

I unwrap the gum and put it in his mouth, telling him my name so that the grape sugar on his tongue will become his thought of me.

He nods and chews. I sneak my hand to the vinyl headrest, almost skin temperature, and smoothed by his neck and hair.

"Let's go find the unit-chief doctor," I say, and Jorge follows, the heavy movement of the chair shaking the floor beneath us.

I GET into bed with the phone book and my list: medical equipment, pharmacy (delivery service?), furniture, foreign-language tapes (in case his Spanish is better than his English), carpenter (ramp). I underline "carpenter" twice and call three names, leaving messages on their machines. It can't take more than a week to put a ramp where the kitchen steps are now. In my mind, I move the living-room furniture around and get rid of the glass coffee table. When Marc falls asleep, dried red wine sitting in the corners of his mouth, I get up and move the actual pieces, shoving the coffee table into Marc's study for now. My body hums. I hang up my clothes, wipe Marc's damp mouth with my fingers, and pull the blanket up around him. I fall asleep easily, dreaming of Jorge, my little egg, rolling around on our queen-size bed, the silk spread smooth beneath his skin. ◆

THE CRITICS

THE THEATRE

SPELLBOUND

BY JOHN LAHR

EVEN before Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber rang up the first-night curtain on "Sunset Boulevard," which opened at London's Adelphi Theatre on July 12th, after two weeks of technical delays, the musical was doing its commercial work in the world. The London production had an advance of six and a half million pounds. The merchandise—baseball caps, key rings, sweatshirts, mugs, sheet music—was selling briskly. The American juggernaut was set to descend first on L.A., in December, when Glenn Close replaces Patti LuPone as the spellbound silent-film star Norma Desmond, and then to land on Broadway in October, 1994, with La LuPone resuming the lead. Barbra Streisand had put her vocal imprimatur on the prerelease of two of the show's best songs in her recent "Back to Broadway" album. And for months London's newspapers, buses, and subways had been stamping the cerebellums of the citizenry with the show's logo—a Hollywood street sign with the shadowy fronds of a palm tree looming like talons over the words "Sunset Blvd. 10086"—until it was as familiar as graffiti on the city's graphic landscape.

Lloyd Webber's prowess at marketing his eleven previous shows has earned him the sobriquet in England of "Andrew Lloyd's Bank." (In 1991, he sold off a third of his newly privatized Really Useful Group to PolyGram for an initial payment of sixty-eight million pounds.) But Lloyd Webber's significance is greater than just his bank account. In show *business*, which the musical epitomizes, he who fills the theatre calls the tune, and, inevitably, form follows money. So which way an Andrew Lloyd Webber musical jumps is significant not just to him but, oddly, to the development of the genre, once a glorious fun machine but now yet another fabulous theatrical invalid. Lloyd Webber is one of the few practitioners freely allowed to ply their trade and search for remedies. At the moment, the musical is caught between the boulevard nihilism of Stephen Sondheim, which doesn't send in the crowds, and the boulevard bravado of Lloyd Webber, which does. "We are back into opera," Lloyd Webber was saying four years ago about "Aspects of Love." He was also arrogantly proclaiming, "The composer must dictate the evening, because you, in the end, are the dramatist." But musicals are to opera what Ping-Pong is to tennis, and in the intervening years Lloyd Webber seems to have got the message. In choosing to re-create the famous 1950 Billy Wilder film for his first genuine book musical, Lloyd Webber has discovered the value both of the playwright (in this case, the masterly adapter of "Les Liaisons Dangereuses," Christopher Hampton) and of strong narrative. Whatever the show's limitations, this in itself is an important sign of changing times for the musical: it is now warily trying to steer a survival course between the shallows of extravaganza and the shoals of experiment.

Lloyd Webber's approach to "Sunset Boulevard" is radically conservative, and goes backward into the future, by taking its inspiration not from musicals but entirely from movies. His music and orchestrations make a stab at the lush romantic longing of Erich Korngold's film scores. The book preserves the plot's fine architecture and large chunks of its famous dialogue, written by Wilder, D. M. Marshman, Jr., and the former *New Yorker* drama critic Charles Brackett. (Wilder wrote to Lloyd Webber congratulating the authors for "a very ingenious idea," and adding, "You left the original script alone, you did not try to *improve* it.") The set designer, John Napier, reproduces the gloomy clutter and shuttered monumentality of the Desmond mansion, in all its black-marbled and gilt-filigreed rococo glory. And the director, Trevor Nunn, cleverly uses the Adelphi's new, temperamental hydraulics system to allow the stage pictures to create the illusion of the film language of dissolves, closeups, and even montage (in a car chase, which also plays with rear projection). Nunn brilliantly reinvents Wilder's startling first image, putting the theatre audience "underwater" and simulating the play of light over the narrator's floating corpse as it's fished with a grappling hook out of Norma Desmond's swimming pool. The image gets the musical, like the movie, off to a cracking start. The show's problem is not delivering spectacle but delivering credibility to Norma Desmond's vaunted star quality.

"To want fame," E. M. Cioran writes in "The New Gods," "is to prefer dying scorned than forgotten." "Sunset Boulevard" dramatizes this sardonic dilemma. Norma Desmond has outlived her silent-film stardom, and is plotting her comeback to the industry that she helped create and that, with talkies, has rejected her. She has written an improbable, unfilmable vehicle for herself, about Salome, and stumbles upon an equally improbable collaborator, the penniless but promising young screenwriter Joe Gillis (the narrator), who already has a bellyful of Hollywood rejections. As conceived, Desmond is a desperate, predatory, demented, but indubitable legend. The charisma of a star is hard to define, but, whatever its specific properties, it's something palpable—a recognizable immanence of the extraordinary. Wilder, whose first choice for the role was Mae West, used the iconic face of Gloria Swanson (along with the faces of Buster Keaton and Erich von Stroheim), to bring a sense of both accomplishment and loss to the screen. The stage "Sunset" can't do that; with Patti LuPone, in fact, it can't even simulate the aura of celebrity. Here the frail Norma Desmond has a voice that could shatter a follow spot. LuPone's glorious sound has impact, but her acting doesn't. On her first entrance, Desmond mythologizes her legend:

> With one look
> I can break your heart. . . .
> With one smile
> I'm the girl next door
> Or the love that you've hungered
> for.

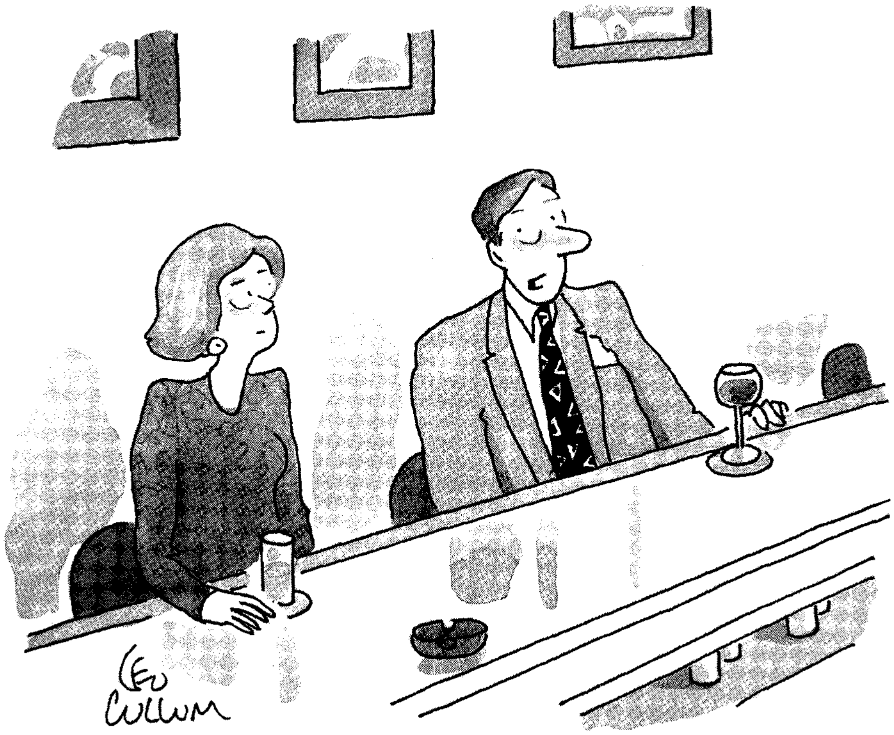
But the song's promise and LuPone's presence are at odds. LuPone, who radiates will and energy, lacks charm. For all her technical panache, she never exhibits the star's impulse to captivate. The entrances and exits, so crucial to a legend's presentation of self and so perfectly managed onscreen, are ungainly onstage. The stairs—and there are a lot of them—are hard for the pint-size LuPone to negotiate in platform heels. She hasn't the star's silhouette, or a clue to what it means to manage it. She is too small to wear well the Anthony Powell turbans and outré period costumes, which make her seem, especially in one zebra-skin schmatte, like a walking, talking El Morocco banquette. Decked out in a red-haired wig and those unfortunate shoes, LuPone looks more like Fanny Brice than like a fading femme fatale. She can make us feel the tenacity of the character but not her vulnerability. Despite her superb renditions of "The Perfect Year," "With One Look," and "As If We Never Said Goodbye," her performance leaves the field open for Glenn Close, who may not have the vocal cords but has the acting chops for the part. She brings with her both the aura of authentic film celebrity and the silhouette of glamour, which should give the musical's plot a much needed unspoken poignance.

Say goodbye to Hollywood: Patti LuPone and Kevin Anderson in "Sunset Boulevard."

"Andrew plays you a stack of music before the tune," Don Black, the coauthor, with Hampton, of the lyrics and book, told me in discussing the working method that has produced "Tell Me on a Sunday," "Song & Dance," and "Aspects of Love." "He sits there with his shoulders hunched. He will look at you and say 'Norma comes onstage.' He's playing. 'She looks at Joe.' He changes key, maybe. 'Joe looks at her.' He's played sixty bars. 'She looks sad.' He's still playing. He kind of shoehorns you into the moment. He's more a musical dramatist than a songwriter. He's forever changing keys. He's really into harmonics. He'll look at the show, and you expect him to say something amazing or really startling. He'll turn around and say, 'We should have put that in D minor.' Andrew likes instant responses. He likes a song to grab you instantly. He loved 'With One Look' after the second line: 'With one look / I can break your heart.' He relaxes. The lines on his face go. It's as if he's saying, 'We're on our way.' "

The superb melodramatic plot of "Sunset Boulevard" keeps Lloyd Webber honest. As a composer, he has a penchant for cheap thrills, inflating the banal into the behemoth. His method is to find nuggets of melody and to rework those motifs throughout the evening. It's a case of the piper not just calling the tune but playing it again and again and again. If tunes have real distinction, they can bear the weight of repetition. Lloyd Webber's generally don't, but he makes them sound as if they did. Musically speaking, a Lloyd Webber hit song—"Memory," "Love Changes Everything," "The Music of the Night"—is tall by walking on tiptoes. This is not altogether the case with "Sunset Boulevard": here Lloyd Webber provides many more melodies than usual and, in the case of "With One Look" and the title song, succeeds in deepening his musical range. The show-biz milieu, with the sweet smell of expectation mixing with the unpleasant whiff of frustration, has called out of him his most persuasive score. The show is still not what Leonard Bernstein called "an honest-to-God composition," but it exhibits the stretch marks of maturity.

The show's themes have also inspired inventive lyrics from Black and his partner, Hampton, who, in his maiden voyage as a lyricist, joins William Saroyan as the only other playwright to have written a hit song. Hampton, who knows all about the Hollywood hustle after fifteen years of plying the screenwriting trade there, and Black, whose specialty is big emotional moments such as have produced the songs "To Sir with Love," "Born Free," and "Diamonds Are Forever," know the hazardous Hollywood



"I was sleepless once, but it was in Omaha."

• •

terrain and make it vivid. They're a good team, and nowhere is the combination of head and heart more sensational than in the edgy brilliance of the title song. Here, with the help of an appealing, laid-back performance by Kevin Anderson, who plays Joe Gillis, they spell out the punishment of the Hollywood dream, moving the song from sharp description ("But, after a year / A one-room hell / A Murphy bed / A rancid smell") to acid comment:

> Dreams are not enough
> To win a war
> Out here they're always keeping score
> Beneath the tan the battle rages
> Smile a rented smile
> Fill someone's glass
> Kiss someone's wife
> Kiss someone's ass
> We do whatever pays the wages.

It's not Brecht, but it's not bad. More than once, lines sit so nicely on the melody that they seem inevitable. Joe, who becomes Norma Desmond's gigolo, describes his corruption with enviable compression: "She was sinking fast / I threw a rope / Now I have suits / And she has hope." And when, in a completely different mood, Norma finds herself in the full, thrilling glare of a spotlight as the cast gathers around her on a Paramount soundstage, Black and Hampton make her longing memorable, in "As If We Never Said Goodbye":

> I've spent so many mornings
> Just trying to resist you
> I'm trembling now
> You can't know how
> I've missed you.

Other songs—the introduction to the studio hubbub, "Let's Have Lunch"; the dressing up of Joe in "The Lady's Paying"; and a spoof of Norma's comeback ablutions, "Eternal Youth Is Worth a Little Suffering"—lack comparable vivacious precision. But in musicals these days we should be grateful for small blessings. And you can't be too hard on lyricists who manage to rhyme "kosher" with "brochure" and wittily spoof De Mille's "Samson and Delilah" with "Every girl in the chorus line / Is a genuine Philistine."

The Hampton-Black adaptation effectively puts a new chassis on the vintage engine of the Wilder-Brackett story. The musical emphasizes the romantic over the sardonic. They have developed the character of Betty Schaefer (well sung by the gamine Meredith Braun) to give Joe a real emotional choice and to add weight to the love triangle. But the show misses one enormous dramatic opportunity when, on New Year's Eve, Joe joins his bohemian friends, leaving Norma alone in her mansion. Here Nunn splits the set, but the counterpoint is only visual. Much more musical irony could have been had in a lyrical exchange contrasting the promising actors "below" and the forgotten Desmond "above." Elsewhere, as late as a day before the show's official opening, Nunn was busy rectifying other musical gaps—shrewdly punching up, for example, Norma's famous batty diva finale, by having her sing at the top of the stairs a plangent reprise from "As If We Never Said Goodbye":

> Has there ever been a moment
> With so much to live for.

Of course, by now Norma has shot Joe, who has staggered downstage and into the orchestra pit, ingeniously designed to create the illusion of a swimming pool. Norma's hopes of a comeback have been just as definitively blasted away. Her long walk down the winding staircase to the waiting cameras is a big ironic moment, which rightly needs more than dialogue ("Mr. De Mille, I'm ready for my closeup") to do it justice. Here, with a reprise of "With One Look," her dementia is also euphoria, and that is as good a metaphor of Hollywood as I know.

"Sunset Boulevard" is still a bit raggedy, but by the time the show reaches Broadway it will be tighter. But it's hard to see how the stature of the story and LuPone's stature will ever have a happy resolution. "Sunset Boulevard" 's ultimate commercial success may rest, ironically, not in people's allegiance to the film but in their ignorance of it. "What's amazed me about the preview audiences is how many people haven't heard of 'Sunset Boulevard,' " Black told me. "They've certainly never heard of Gloria Swanson. They've never heard the story. That is wonderful." And it's also wonderful to see an audience drawn into a tale by the cunning power of its storytelling. The show's characters inhabit the moral universe of prose instead of the moralizing abstractions of the "through-sung" musical. Narrative seems to be making a comeback, and the success of "Sunset Boulevard" may eventually lead to adventurous new stories. The musical is by no means a great one, but it is also not a beggar's banquet, where we are undernourished and underprivileged. ♦

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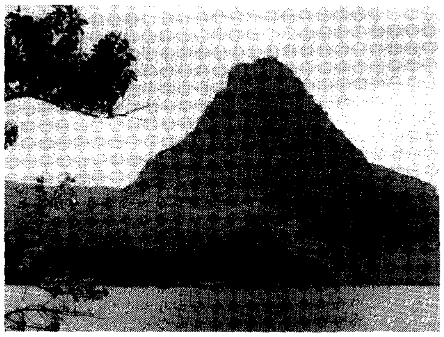

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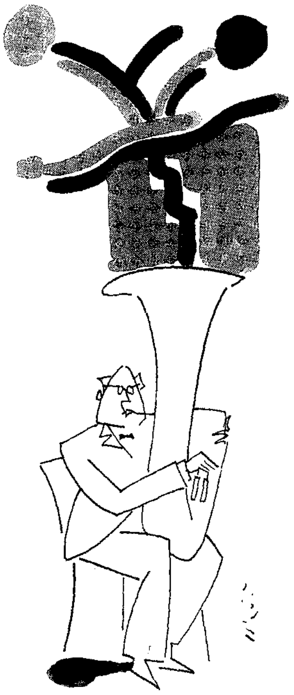
JAZZ

JUMPIN' AT THE WHITE HOUSE

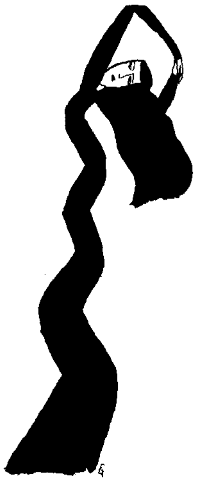
BY WHITNEY BALLIETT



BRIAN GRIMWOOD

IN the middle of June, 1978, President Jimmy Carter gave a serene and joyous jazz concert on the South Lawn of the White House. It began with the sun boiling in over the old Executive Office Building and ended, three hours later, under a cool yellow moon. Almost everyone who mattered played, from the Young Tuxedo Brass Band of New Orleans to Cecil Taylor and Ornette Coleman. At the end of the evening, Dizzy Gillespie invited Carter to sing the bebop tune "Salt Peanuts" with him, and, after some Gillespie coaching, he did. Gillespie asked the President if he would like to go on the road with him, and Carter said, "I might have to after tonight." But the concert was not a White House first. Nine years earlier, President Nixon celebrated Duke Ellington's seventieth birthday with a dinner followed by a concert and a dance. Nixon presented Ellington with the Presidential Medal of Freedom, and Ellington gave the President the classic French greeting of right cheek on right cheek, left cheek on left cheek. Nixon played "Happy Birthday" on the piano in G, and Ellington improvised a Debussyesque solo in honor of Mrs. Nixon. Two dozen Ellington numbers were played—not by the Ellington band, which, for whatever reason, was absent, but by a faultless all-star group made up of the likes of Clark Terry, Paul Desmond, Hank Jones, Gerry Mulligan, Jim Hall, and Louis Bellson. Jazz, excluded from the White House for seventy years, had suddenly arrived.

This past June, fifteen years to the day after the Carter concert, the White House again embraced the music. The celebration, prompted by the fortieth anniversary of the Newport Jazz Festival, came in two parts and lasted nearly four hours. The first part was taken up by the superb Smithsonian Jazz Masterworks Orchestra, nineteen strong and conducted alternately by Gunther Schuller and David Baker, and the second part by three small bands, with two solo pianists and several singers interspersed. The S.J.M.O., starting around six o'clock, held forth on the South Balcony of the White House, and the rest of the music, starting two hours later, took place inside a huge warehouse of a tent that had been set up on the South Lawn directly behind the White House. (President Carter's entire evening had been alfresco, with the audience seated at picnic tables or on the grass.) The Smithsonian band included the mellifluous trumpeter Joe Wilder; two old Ellington trombonists, Britt Woodman and Buster Cooper; and the ingenious Lester Young saxophonist Loren Schoenberg, and it offered upward of thirty big-band anthems, among them Charlie Barnet's "Cherokee" and "Skyliner," Tommy Dorsey's "Well, Git It," Count Basie's "Shiny Stockings," and Duke Ellington's "Rockin' in Rhythm" and "Main Stem." As it turned out, though, the band, sitting some thirty feet above the ground behind a substantial railing, was barely audible. The music either wafted into the nearby magnolia trees, or, piped into the tent, was reduced to Muzak. WETA-TV, the PBS outlet in Washington, had agreed to film the second part of the evening for an "In Performance at the White House" program, and apparently someone had decided that the S.J.M.O., if allowed to perform inside the tent, would only clutter up the bandstand. In fact, the bandstand seemed big enough to hold a symphony orchestra, and the band's paraphernalia could have been removed from the stand several times over during the half hour between its last number and the second part of the program. In effect, the best jazz repertory band in the country, playing what was often the best music of the concert, was used for seating music.



At precisely seven-fifty, the President and Mrs. Clinton appeared onstage in the tent—she in a black-and-tan animal-print top and wide-legged black pants, and he in a navy blazer, gray pants, and a purplish shirt open at the neck. Mrs. Clinton introduced the President by saying that there is "no bigger jazz fan in the country," and Clinton said that jazz was "America's classical music," a music of "struggle, but played in celebration." The Clintons sat down at adjoining tables immediately in front of the bandstand. (There were more than seventy tables in the tent, each seating ten people.) Wynton Marsalis brought out his septet and played his own thirteen-minute suite "Modern Vistas As Far As the Eye Can See," which had discordant Charles Mingus ensembles, Ellington harmonies, a lovely repeated descending figure, and a Marsalis solo full of Rex Stewart half-valving and guttural sounds. The second number, announced as an Ellington blues called "Play the Blues and Go," was strikingly similar to the sinuous, loose-limbed blues that Johnny Hodges used to write in his sleep. (At this point, the greenery outside was turning dusk-gray, and various helicopterlike insects had discovered that the tent, roughly the temperature of a brick factory, was open on the sides.) A young pianist from Santo Domingo named Michel Camilo played an ornate solo ballad that matched his flaming-orange suit. Rosemary Clooney, under orders to do just two numbers, sang "Love Is Here to Stay" and Dave Frishberg's funny, forlorn hymn to the loneliness of being on the road, "Sweet Kentucky Ham," and then, her voice just beginning to jell and the audience just beginning to get her into focus, left the stage. A somewhat ill-matched pickup group, led by Illinois Jacquet, and including Clark Terry on trumpet, Al Grey on trombone, Dewey Redman's son Joshua on saxophone, Dick Hyman on piano, Charlie Haden on bass, and Elvin Jones on drums, played a medium-tempo "I Got Rhythm" variant called "One More for Dizzy," on which Jacquet pasted his famous "Flyin' Home" solo, a classic example of a long-frozen improvisation that is nonetheless fluid and stirring every time he plays it. Not much else happened in the number until Elvin Jones, taming his style for the music at hand, took a slashing, startling eight-bar solo in the final chorus. In the group's second tune, a medium blues, Terry, playing sotto voce, got off a double-time figure that went by so fast it was back before it had left, and Jacquet moved his sumptuous Southwestern tone around like a dealer arranging bibelots.

Television lights had been blazing since the set began, and two or three handheld cameras swam relentlessly around the stage, seemingly peering into the musicians' ears, examining their cuticles, and counting their hairs. Dorothy Donegan, got up in a silver jacket and navy-blue pants covered with sequins, sat down at the piano and made a moue at the President, who, transfixed since the music began, gave his all-purpose half smile and tilted his head slightly to his left. For the next three or four dazzling minutes, Donegan showed us a cross-section of a number whose layers were made up of "I Can't Get Started," some Rachmaninoff, "The Man I Love," and boogie-woogie. As she gained speed, her right leg began gyrating, and it looked as if she might jump up and do one of her tumultuous dances, but she contained herself, finishing with a blinding two-handed run.

Into each concert some acedia must fall, and Bobby McFerrin wound his way through two of his surrealistic vocal exercises, one solo and one with the pianist Herbie Hancock, who then accompanied Joe Henderson, a kind of secular John Coltrane, in what has become his "Body and Soul"—Billy Strayhorn's "Lush Life." Hancock stayed on to back the flaccid soprano saxophonist Grover Washington, Jr., who played a Hancock tune called "Just Enough," and both made way for the evening's final pickup group, a muscular bebop assemblage that numbered Red Rodney and Jon Faddis; Jimmy Heath, Henderson, and Washington; and a rhythm section of John Lewis, Christian McBride, and Thelonious Monk, Jr. They played medium-tempo versions of Dizzy Gillespie's "A Night in Tunisia" and "Confirmation." John Lewis, soloing in both numbers, offset Faddis's crimson overblowing, and so did Rodney, in two beautifully structured solos.

Joe Williams joined the group for the finale, and sang "Every Day I Have the Blues" and Joe Turner's "Shake, Rattle and Roll." When Williams sang the words "I'd rather drink muddy water and sleep in a hollow log," he asked the audience to join in, and the President obliged. At the end of the second number, Clinton ran onto the stage, shook hands with everyone, and summoned all the earlier performers. He said something about jazz being a "music of inclusion, a music of democracy," and suddenly someone handed him a tenor saxophone. Miles Davis's waltz "All Blues" began, and Clinton, with Illinois Jacquet standing beside him, shepherd-fashion, took two fine choruses of the sort you might have heard on a Big Bill Broonzy record from the forties. (He is, however, a Zoot Sims fan. Not long ago, he wrote Louise Sims, Zoot's widow, saying, "I *loved* Zoot's music and would have been honored to have him play at my Inauguration.") Williams and McFerrin started singing, and Clinton joined Jacquet and Joe Henderson for some background riffs. The music gradually subsided, and Jacquet hugged the President. Clinton left the stage and joined Mrs. Clinton, and they were immediately swallowed by well-wishers. But his two choruses of the blues hung above this jostling panorama like a prayer. ♦

NASHVILLE, Tenn.—Jan van Breda Kolff didn't think a chance to return to Vanderbilt would come this quickly. He was introduced as the new basketball on the campus where he had starred as a player.

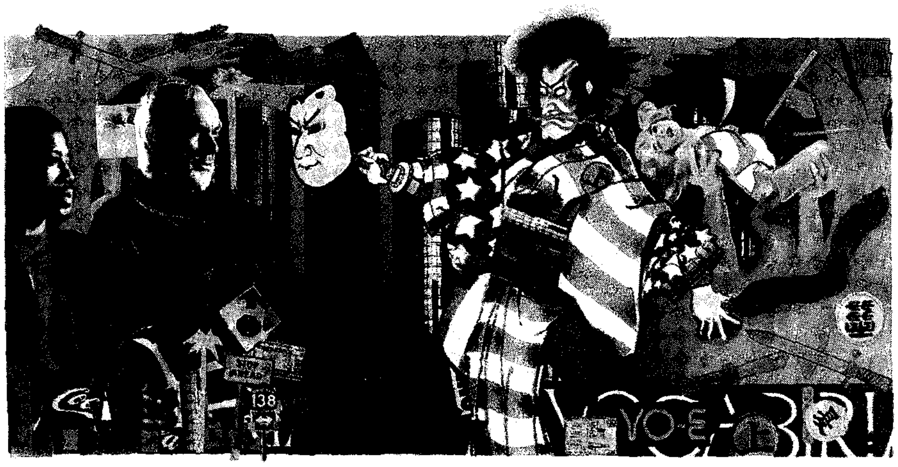
—*Poughkeepsie Journal.*

You really can't go home again.

THE CURRENT CINEMA

CITY OF DEMONS

BY TERRENCE RAFFERTY



Corporate culture: Wesley Snipes and Sean Connery in "Rising Sun."

MICHAELE VOLLBRACH

PHILIP KAUFMAN'S witty, luxuriantly sinister mystery thriller "Rising Sun" is set in Los Angeles, and, as in Raymond Chandler's stories, a moral haze seems to hang over the city. If anything, the air feels even more toxic now than in Chandler's day, when his urban knight-errant, the private detective Philip Marlowe, was always able, somehow, to emerge uncorrupted from his forays into the murky world of gangsters, treacherous smoothies, and the unprincipled rich. Marlowe cut through everything like a Zen swordsman—pure of heart, wise in the ways of evil, and tenacious in his search for justice and enlightenment. In "Rising Sun," the murder of a blond party girl (Tatjana Patitz) in the boardroom of a powerful Japanese corporation exposes a network of connections—among business enterprises (Japanese and American), politicians, the police, and the press—too dense to yield to the old-fashioned weapons that Marlowe armed himself with. The new, high-tech arsenal of investigative aids—computers, video surveillance systems, and the like—isn't necessarily reliable, either. All this equipment can be manipulated to create seductively lifelike illusions, lies more persuasive than words could ever manage. (A subtly doctored video-disk that seems to reveal the identity of the killer is a key element in the story.) The sleek, corporate L.A. that Kaufman's characters move in isn't merely shady and deceitful, as Marlowe's world was: it's *fundamentally* inauthentic—a total, enveloping fiction, like virtual reality.

The novel, by Michael Crichton, on which the movie is based (the screenplay is credited to Kaufman, Crichton, and Michael Backes) was accused of Japan-bashing when it was published, last year, and it's not difficult to understand why. What makes Crichton's book seem such a crude, simplistic fable about the Asian threat to America's economic security isn't so much the nature of its villains—cunning Japanese businessmen and their henchmen—as the nature of its heroes. The L.A.P.D. detectives who crack the sordid case are a young officer named Peter Smith, who provides all-American righteousness and grit, and a veteran named John Connor, who provides encyclopedic, detailed knowledge of the nuances of Japanese culture. (Connor, we're told, lived in Japan for years.) Together, Connor and Smith embody the qualities that, in Crichton's view, will enable the United States to repel the charge of the economic warriors from across the Pacific: thorough, clear-eyed understanding of the opponent, and an unwavering commitment to fairness and the truth. Crichton's composite Marlowe-for-the-nineties carries the "Book of Five Rings" in one holster and the Boy

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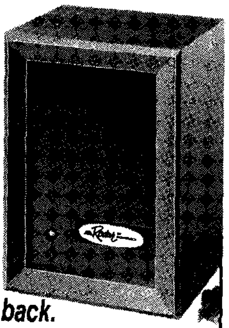

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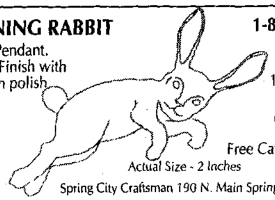

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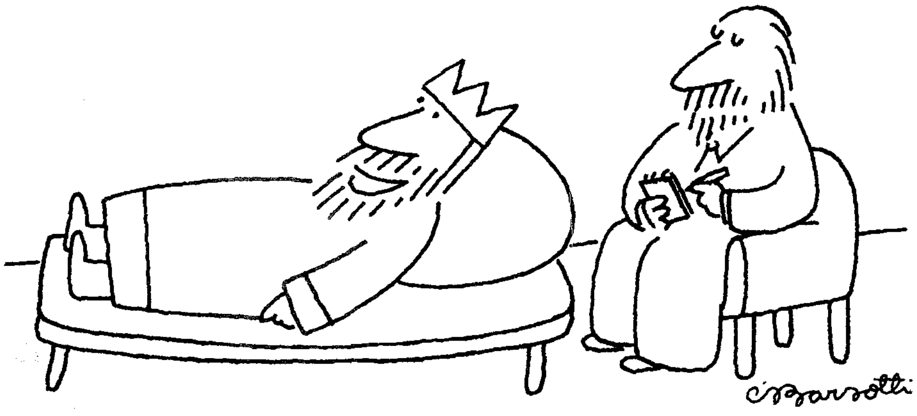
Scout Handbook in the other, and strides through the plush corridors of corporate high-rises as Chandler's hero walked the mean streets, "neither tarnished nor afraid." With the right combination of know-how and moral purity, the muddled world regains its order and clarity—and Americans are on top of it again.

Kaufman's "Rising Sun" is no less a cautionary tale than Crichton's novel, but the dangers it warns us of are different. In the movie, the enemy is the corporate culture itself—not just the specific business tactics of the Japanese. That's a much slipperier and more formidable dragon to slay than the comic-book monster of the novel, and getting in touch with the inner Yank is no longer a surefire strategy for victory: American society is no more immune to the enchantment of money and power than Japan's is. Kaufman is alert to the sensual delights of wealth and its pursuit. He and his cinematographer, Michael Chapman, show us a world of alluring surfaces, rising like mirages out of the heat of economic battle: majestic glass office buildings; tall women with perfect skin; impeccably tailored suits that make the wearers look as noble and as unassailable as statues of military heroes; brilliant-colored kimonos, draped loosely (and promisingly); streamlined, phallic sports cars; dazzlingly complex electronic toys; golf courses with manicured fairways and firm greens. It's a wonderland, and the "good" Americans, Connor and Smith (played by Sean Connery and Wesley Snipes), are by no means impervious to its attractions. Smith, who is divorced, looks yearningly at every woman he comes across; and he has been accused of taking a bribe in a previous case. Connor, dressed throughout in dark Armani suits and dark shirts, is a mysteriously formal, reserved man, who seems suspiciously at ease among the businessmen: he plays golf with the chairman of Nakamoto, the corporation in whose offices the body was found, and accepts from this golfing partner—who is presumably a suspect in the case—the gift of a membership in an extremely expensive country club. The heroes, in Kaufman's version, may not be as corrupt as the people they're investigating (or, indeed, as some of the policemen whom they work alongside), but the movie never allows us to see them as mythically incorruptible; they're ambiguous heroes in a looking-glass world.

The beauty of Kaufman's approach to the material is that it teases an unexpected streak of humor out of Crichton's dourly purposeful story. It's a given of detective fiction that things are not what they seem: the detective, as an unprejudiced and wholly independent eye, is meant to strip disruptive events—crimes—of the confusions and artful ruses that their perpetrators have cloaked them in, and reveal the truth, the thing itself. In the movie "Rising Sun," reality is inherently unstable, like the stock market, and, with the aid of advanced technology, highly malleable: in this sophisticated form of play, there's practically no such thing as a disinterested observer—the images manipulated by the corporate society work so efficiently on our communal assumptions and desires that it almost seems more disruptive to disbelieve them than to accept them. Even when Smith and Connor have arrived at a more plausible version of the truth, the solution feels tenuous: the fog never quite lifts. (There's a suggestion that Connor, who likes to refer to interrogating as "negotiating," is aware of the provisional nature of the solution—that he sees it as a kind of working agreement with reality, imperfect but good enough to sign off on.) In a sense, Kaufman's detectives are like characters in an absurdist reworking of "The Big Sleep": they bear down hard on the problem at hand, but there's something faintly silly about their efforts, because, unlike Marlowe, they don't stand heroically apart from the world they're trying to figure out. They are, like everyone else in the bafflingly interconnected universe of the global economy, both in it and of it, and they worry the small chunks of verifiable fact that come their way with the desperate concentration of a Beckett character fondling a handful of stones.

This is an odd sort of humor for a big-budget Hollywood thriller to have, and it's very welcome. Kaufman treats cop-movie narrative conventions and film-noir visual style (high-contrast lighting, rain-slick streets, and so on) with a kind of affectionate, delicate irony. "Rising Sun" supplies plenty of creepy atmosphere and violent, splendidly staged action, and its pace is relentless, but the picture's over-all mood is playful, almost giddy. Having divested



"It's a cage. It's gilded, and I love it."

• •

the movie of the novel's heavy, do-or-die message about the Japanese-American economic conflict, and of the hardboiled genre's sentimental conception of the perfect urban knight, Kaufman leaves himself free to indulge his intelligent curiosity about all that is freakish and deranging in the advanced corporate culture of 1993 Los Angeles.

While the murder plot keeps our attention focussed, as a familiar melody does, Kaufman reels off a series of deft, unpredictable improvisations on the main theme. "Rising Sun" takes the time to explore, briefly but pointedly, some of the large areas of American life that aren't visible in the carefully framed images churned out by the businessmen: stifling, sun-baked ghettos; avenues lined with the homeless. The minor characters are sharp and often hilarious satiric portraits. The Americans include a weaselly yuppie facilitator (Kevin Anderson); a glib and spineless United States senator (Ray Wise); a loud, Japan-bashing cop (Harvey Keitel, in top form); an unscrupulous investigative reporter (Steve Buscemi); and a pair of cretinous computer-nerd entrepreneurs who can't decide whether or not to sell their software company to Nakamoto. The Japanese are represented by Nakamoto's imperious C.E.O. (Mako); a sweaty, shifty-eyed junior executive named Ishihara (Stan Egi); and, most memorably, the cheerful hedonist Eddie Sakamura (Cary-Hiroyuki Tagawa), who is, in some strange way, the movie's most appealing character. Eddie likes fast cars, karaoke, and group sex, and dabbles occasionally in corporate intrigue; with his retinue of unsmiling yakuza, he looks pretty menacing at first, but he enjoys his sleazy life style so thoroughly that you find yourself rooting for him. He's in the corporate power game just for the fun of it—and that, "Rising Sun" seems to say, is the only defensible (or, at least, honest) justification for playing.

And the most defensible, and honest, reason to watch expensive, handsomely mounted studio movies is the fun of seeing stars like Connery and Snipes at play. They're both wonderful in this picture. Connery hasn't looked so elegant since the Bond movies, and he uses his daunting air of assurance to tremendous effect: he makes the character's Zen opacity seem both ominous and deeply funny. Snipes, as the bewildered-innocent half of the detective team (and thus the character that the mystified audience has to identify with), has the trickier role, and brings it off flawlessly: his confusion is necessarily comic, but he never seems a buffoon. In the world of "Rising Sun," there's humor, but no fundamental indignity, in not knowing what the hell is going on. Kaufman, like Chandler in his very different way, respects the difficulty of getting to the bottom of things. In "The Simple Art of Murder" Chandler described the goal of his sort of fiction as "an effect of movement, intrigue, cross-purposes, and the gradual elucidation of character, which is all the detective story has any right to be about anyway." Kaufman deploys these deceptively modest elements more eccentrically, but his detective story winds up in a place not far from where Chandler's stories did. It's a thrilling and eerily suggestive tour of a territory whose boundaries are maddeningly elusive, murderously fluid. ♦

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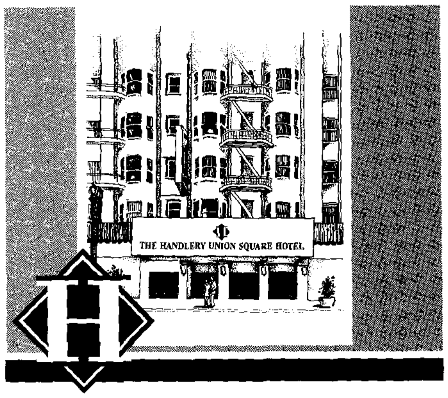

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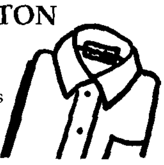

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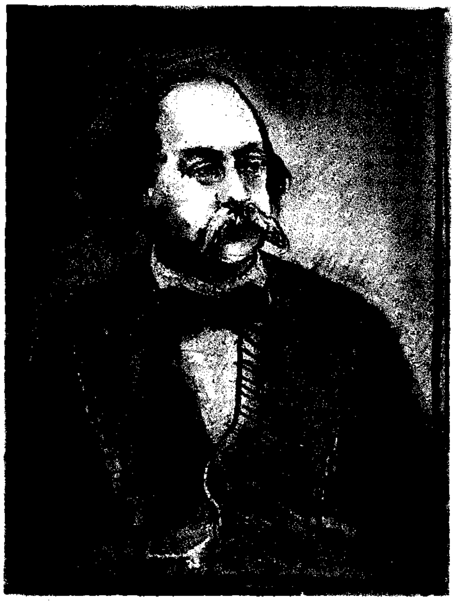
A CRITIC AT LARGE

CHÈRE MAÎTRE

BY FRANCINE DU PLESSIX GRAY

No writer of the past centuries has been used as frequently as Gustave Flaubert as a symbol for the alchemy of fiction, the mystery and torment of the creative process. Just as his best-known creation, Emma Bovary, has become an archetype of the Romantic heroine destroyed by her illusions, so Flaubert has come to be looked on as the ur-author, the "novelists' novelist," the man who characterizes like no other writer, with the possible exception of Kafka, the discipline, dedication, solitude, despair, and potential grandeur of the writer's life. Beyond the sheer splendor of his work, many factors have contributed to Flaubert's emblematic stature: his proverbially arduous process of working; his eminence as the pioneer, simultaneously, of the realist, the modern, and the postmodern novel; the puzzling paradoxes of his character; and his legendary reclusiveness.



"Flaubert — Sand: The Correspondence" is one of the greatest epistolary masterpieces of modern times.

CHRISTINA LEIGH

Flaubert's curriculum vitae is skeletally simple. Born in 1821, died in 1880, published five books during his lifetime: "Madame Bovary," "Salammbô," "A Sentimental Education," "The Temptation of Saint Anthony," and "Three Tales." ("Bouvard and Pécuchet" came out posthumously, in 1881.) He was the son of a prosperous Normandy doctor, and from the age of twenty-two until his death he lived in his family home, at Croisset, a settlement on the Seine a few miles from Rouen. There he worked slowly and laboriously into the dawn hours, chiselling his clauses so meticulously that he seldom finished more than a paragraph or two a day, sitting in the same room, at the same desk, throughout the span of his creative life. He lived in terror of the recurring seizures, most probably caused by epilepsy, that began to fell him in his early twenties. He made epochal journeys abroad, to the Middle East and to North Africa, in 1849 and 1858, but the rest of his wanderings—an occasional foray to Italy or Great Britain, a few weeks' stay in Paris—were, like any venture outside his family home, undertaken with dread, as potentially damaging to his ever fragile, painful process of literary creation. "I am like a row of milk pans," he once wrote. "If you want the cream to form, you have to leave them exactly where they are."

Flaubert considered marriage "an apostasy," and would rather "jump in the Seine with cannon balls on my feet" than beget a child. And although he sought occasional pleasure with prostitutes and actresses, his only acknowledged liaison was with the tempestuous Parisian poet and novelist Louise Colet, eleven years his senior. He treasured above all else his Homerically ardent friendships with male peers, and lived a lifelong Oedipal folie à deux with his widowed mother, a dour, possessive hypochondriac, whom he survived by only eight years.

Here are some of the paradoxes that have heightened Flaubert's spell on posterity: A jovial bon vivant, an explosive conversationalist with a booming laugh and a dazzling Rabelaisian wit, he hungered for friendship but eschewed most human company to dedicate himself totally to art. A strapping youth, he was described as being "of heroic beauty"; he was known to be an exceptionally gifted lover, with fabled speeds of recuperation, yet he denied himself more than a few sexual encounters a year, largely for fear of diminishing his creative flow. He equally detested "the People" and all forms of government. His even greater loathing for the bourgeoisie was imbued with self-hatred, for he knew well enough that he was himself a consummate bourgeois. ("This ought to be a practical dogma in the artist's life . . . live like a bourgeois, and think like a demigod," he wrote.) And his vitriolic hatred for all organized religion was matched by a lifelong obsession with the nature of religious experience.

In fact, nothing better expresses Flaubert's self-immolation in art than the numerous metaphors in which he views the act of writing as a monastic, mystical calling: "I love my work with a frenetic and perverted love, the way an ascetic monk loves the haircloth plaguing his flesh," he wrote to Louise Colet, and he often stressed that in his youth he had had a powerful urge to castrate himself. "I've taken pleasure in combatting my senses and torturing my heart. I've refused all human ecstasies," he wrote, adding, "In order not to live, I immerse myself in Art, in my despair."

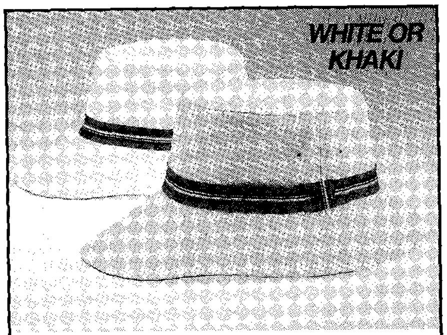
But a radically opposite imagery recurs, in which this "*homme-plume*," as Flaubert referred to himself, describes the literary act through metaphors of his sublimated sexuality. When he is writing well, "something deep and extravoluptuous flows out of me in precipitated jets, like an ejaculation of the soul," he writes to Colet. "The erection arrived with much manipulation and self-flagellation," he declares when he has successfully surmounted a particularly intractable paragraph. "Masturbate the old art into its most profound depths, marrows, joints," he advises a colleague, urging him to work with more dedication. And there is the ultimate Flaubertian metaphor for high literary style: "Thoroughbred styles, like thoroughbred horses, have plenty of blood in their veins, and it can be seen pulsing everywhere in them, under the skin and the words. Life, life, to have erections, that's what it's all about!"

Obsession, paradox, abnegation, the agonizing quest for Absolute Style, the sadomasochistic attempt to conquer the unattainable: these are only a few of the features of Flaubert's life that have captivated the imagination of the public and of his literary heirs, from Ezra Pound, who hailed him as a "true Penelope" to Woody Allen, whose short story "The Kugelmass Episode" is an extended fantasy on Emma Bovary, and Julian Barnes, the author of the brilliant homage "Flaubert's Parrot."

But all these tributes pale compared with the fascination Flaubert has exerted for the past half century over those whose vocation is literary criticism: they have created a Flaubert industry mightier than that elicited by any other nineteenth- or twentieth-century French writer, with the exception of Proust. In the English language alone, there are, among many others, such accomplished works as Francis Steegmuller's pioneering "Flaubert and Madame Bovary" (1939), Victor Brombert's luminous "The Novels of Flaubert" (1964), Enid Starkie's and Benjamin Bart's exhaustive studies of the Master (1967), Jonathan Culler's "Flaubert: The Uses of Uncertainty" (1974), and Naomi Schor and Henry F. Majewski's anthology "Flaubert and Postmodernism" (1984).

As for the body of scholarly essays and doctoral dissertations on Flaubert, it grows more elephantine by the day. Flaubert's œuvre has adapted itself with equal success to all the principal schools of literary criticism of recent decades, in part because it presents a unique diversity of styles and techniques (the lapidary precision of "Madame Bovary," the extravagantly opulent Orientalism of "Salammbô," the postmodern laconism of "A Sentimental Education" and "Bouvard and Pécuchet," and a blend of all three styles in "Three Tales"). It has lent itself to the New Criticism, to structuralism, and to deconstruction. Flaubert has also thrived under Lacanian and other psychoanalytic interpretations (the sadomasochistic imagery of "The Temptation of Saint Anthony," Emma Bovary's "unresolved penis envy"). And he is doing equally well under the scrutiny of neo-Marxist and New Historicist approaches. Flaubert has become a critic's pet in part because he has simply given that profession *more to do;* like some gigantically branching oak, he has enabled tens of thousands of exegetes to clamor about him in a variety of different jargons, all deriving a wealth of meaning from the echoes his prose returns.

THE kind of mystique that surrounds Flaubert inevitably becomes a double-edged sword. It is bound to incite the writing of considerable rubbish as well as the unearthing of great riches. Henri Troyat's "Flaubert" (Viking; 1992)



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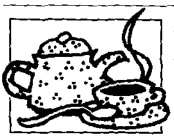

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belongs to the first category, whereas "Flaubert — Sand: The Correspondence," translated by Francis Steegmuller and Barbara Bray (Knopf; 1993), belongs to the second. Along with Jean Bruneau's dazzling Pléiade edition of the Master's correspondence, it is the most important Flaubert document published in the postwar era; and it is one of the greatest epistolary masterpieces of modern times, approximated, perhaps, only by the exchanges between George Bernard Shaw and Ellen Terry, Walter Benjamin and Gershom Scholem, and Edmund Wilson and Vladimir Nabokov.

As I finished Troyat's biography of Flaubert, which came out in France in 1988, I was bewildered that the author of competent studies on the writers of his native Russia—Tolstoy, Turgenev, Chekhov—could perform so pitifully in confronting one of the great novelists of his adopted France. If the purpose of biography is to offer fresh insights (and, ideally, to reveal new documents) that will heighten our understanding of a worthy subject, Troyat falls flat on his face.

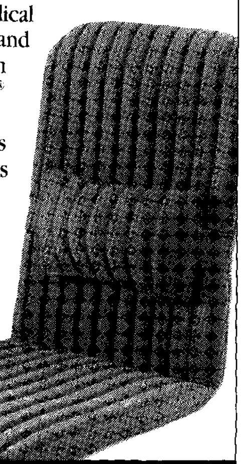
Troyat's bibliography is telling: it fails to list some of the most interesting Flaubertiana published in the past few decades. To cite only two grave omissions: "Flaubert and an English Governess," Hermia Oliver's careful study of Flaubert's probable, highly secretive love affair with his niece Caroline's former governess, Juliet Herbert, after whom his last dog was named; and Louise Colet's "Mementoes," or journals, only discovered in the nineteen-sixties, which bring so much novel insight into Flaubert's personality that the Pléiade edition of the writer's correspondence devotes many pages to them.

A good example of the biographer's seeming primitivism is his bungling of young Gustave's relationship with his father—an awesomely complex relationship, about which Troyat trustingly writes, "In the eyes of little Gustave, [Dr. Flaubert] was a kind of omniscient deity." He goes on to cite the famous passage in Flaubert's correspondence that describes how young Gustave and his sister climbed a trellis in their family's garden in Rouen to watch their father dissecting a cadaver in the adjoining hospital: "The same flies that were flitting around us . . . would light on [the cadavers] and come buzzing back. . . . I can still see my father looking up from his dissection and telling us to go away." The next sentence in Flaubert's text is "He, too, was a cadaver." Troyat leaves it out.

A similar absence of psychological nuance prevails throughout. There is no probing of Flaubert's pathological ties to his mother, or of his inclination to seek out (for either sexual or platonic bonds) viragoesque older women, such as Eulalie Foucaud, Elisa Schlésinger, Louise Pradier, Louise Colet, and George Sand. But it is Troyat's sloppy mistakes and omissions that are most shocking. Flaubert did not enjoy his sexual initiation through the graces of the voluptuous Marseilles hotelkeeper Eulalie Foucaud at the age of eighteen; according to the distinguished Flaubert scholar Francis Steegmuller, he was deflowered four years earlier, by one of his mother's maids—an event that filled him with disgust and may have deepened his ambivalence toward the sexual act. The "wildly uninhibited" Louise Colet had not had "countless love affairs" at the time she met Flaubert; she had merely had two adulterous liaisons—a chaste average for a thirty-five-year-old beauty of her generation. In 1848, upon her first breakup with Flaubert, she gave birth to a son, not a daughter, as Troyat states. In 1851, when Flaubert returned from his Middle Eastern journey, it was Colet, not he, who initiated the correspondence that led to the resumption of their affair. And so on.

Then, there is Troyat's apparent archaic prudishness. What could possibly restrain a contemporary biographer from mentioning one of the most interesting aspects of Flaubert's personality: his latent (or perhaps actual) homosexual tendencies? Take the following passage from a letter written in Egypt to Bouilhet, which has been noted by most recent Flaubertists: "You ask me whether I consummated that piece of work in the baths. Yes, I did. It was with a big young guy covered with smallpox marks who wore an enormous white turban." One does not need to decide whether this homosexual banter is for real or merely an instance of Flaubert's macho grandstanding—another attempt to *épater les copains.* But how can any responsible biographer omit a topic so crucial to the subject's personality and so frequently discussed by other commentators?

Troyat seems to be something of a snob, and lavishes considerable time on Flaubert's high-society flings in the eighteen-sixties, when he hung out with



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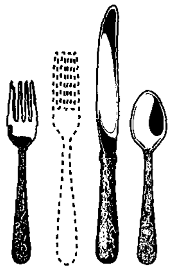

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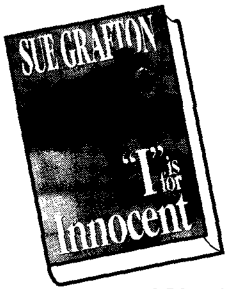

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the Emperor's cousin, the liberal and enlightened Princesse Mathilde, was decorated with the Legion of Honor, and became rather dandyish. These are the only lively tidbits in Troyat's book. This biographer seems to have been trapped in the entry in Flaubert's "Dictionary of Accepted Ideas" which goes, "INNOVATION. Always 'dangerous.' "

IN 1863, at the time George Sand (the pseudonym of Aurore Dudevant) started corresponding with Flaubert, she was at the height of her popularity—a prolific and beloved writer, and one of France's most eminent personalities. Then aged fifty-eight, seventeen years Flaubert's senior, she had triumphantly survived her more controversial years, during which she had been called "a latrine" by Baudelaire and praised as "France's Byron" by Chateaubriand, and had carried on much publicized liaisons with Frédéric Chopin and the dissolute Alfred de Musset. By the eighteen-sixties, she had exchanged the trousers and cigars of her youth for staid, matronly dresses of gray silk. The utopian socialism of her earlier years had given way to an equally fervent, though far less extreme, liberalism. And she had become so much of a national idol that one of the two balloons used to carry mail in and out of Paris during the German siege of the city in the winter of 1870 was named after her.

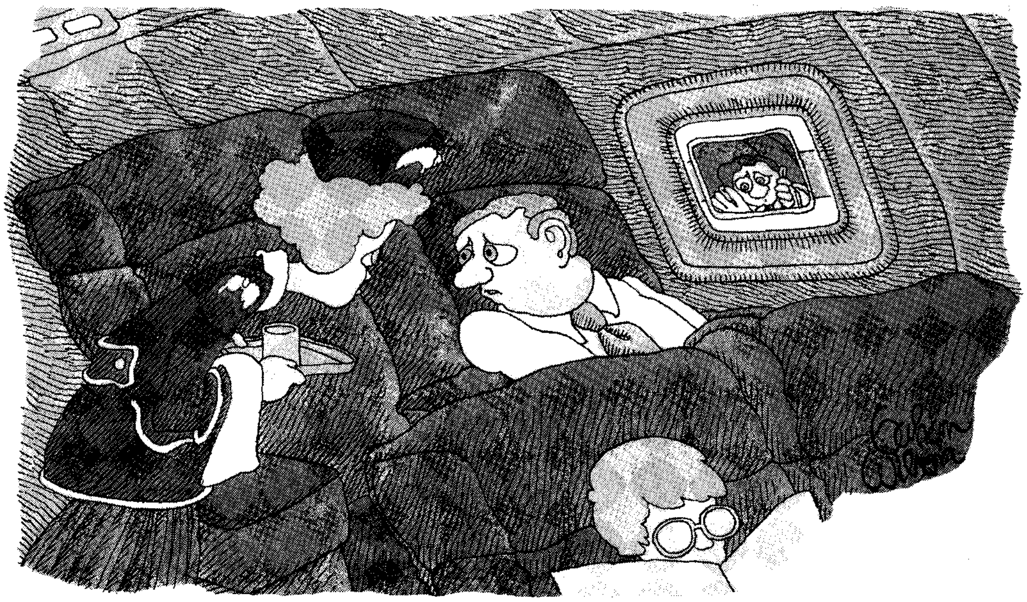
The life of this stupendously energetic Earth Mother remained an amazing balancing act of literary production and devoted family life. To make ends meet, she turned out a novel a year, many plays, and innumerable essays, and also wrote a weekly newspaper column. She lived most of the time on her beloved family estate, Nohant, in central France, sharing it with her son, Maurice; her loving daughter-in-law, Lina; and her granddaughter Aurore, whom she tutored for three or four hours a day. Into her sixties, Sand frequently travelled the hundred and fifty miles to Paris to oversee the direction of her plays, confer with her publishers, tryst with her lover and secretary Alexandre Manceau (thirteen years younger than she), and generally maintain her contacts with Paris society. It was upon one of those occasions that she and Flaubert met, and shortly thereafter they began their correspondence, which is now available in English for the first time, in a magnificent translation by Francis Steegmuller and Barbara Bray. Steegmuller also translated and added to the interweaving texts and notes of Alphonse Jacobs' splendid French edition of 1981, which offer helpful historical and cultural background.

My few quibbles with this long-awaited volume have to do more with slipshod editing and checking than with carelessness on the part of Steegmuller and Bray. The bibliography is sometimes erroneous: To date, Sand's correspondence has reached twenty-five volumes, not fourteen, as stated; the Pléiade edition of Flaubert's correspondence has now reached three volumes, not one. And there are mistakes of biographical and historical detail: Sand never had an affair with the radical priest Félicité-Robert de Lamennais, her mentor and close friend; the adopted son of Flaubert's friend Louis Bouilhet was not Bouilhet's own child but that of his mistress, Léonie Leparfait, by an earlier liaison. These are the principal errors in an otherwise superb production.

FLAUBERT in his youth had not taken kindly to Sand's novels. In an 1852 letter to Louise Colet he characterized them as the sort of literature in which "everything oozes, and ideas trickle between words as though between slack thighs." He also quipped to Bouilhet that every time he read George Sand he was "indignant for a quarter of an hour." But this hostility disappeared in 1857, when Sand defended "Madame Bovary" in her influential weekly column in *Le Courier de Paris.*

Although Flaubert and Sand may have met briefly a few times in Paris, their first surviving exchange of letters dates from January, 1863, when the hermit of Croisset wrote to "*la bonne dame de Nohant*," as she was called in her native province, to thank her for her favorable review of "Salammbô," and, in his next letter, asked her for a portrait of herself to hang over his desk at Croisset. But the correspondence did not become truly established until 1866, when Sand first attended one of the "Magny dinners"—monthly Monday-night gatherings of writers and artists which took place in a private dining room of the Restaurant Magny, on the Left Bank. Besides Flaubert and Bouilhet, these dinners drew such luminaries as Sainte-Beuve, Théophile Gautier, Hippolyte Taine, Ernest Renan, the brothers Edmond and Jules de Goncourt, and the Russian exile Ivan Turgenev. After Sand's first appearance at a Magny soirée (she was the only woman invited to these gatherings), the Goncourt brothers noted that she glanced timidly around the table and murmured to Flaubert, "You're the only one here with whom I feel at ease."

From that day on, until Sand's death, a decade later, she and Flaubert wrote to each other as often as twice a week. Within a few months, their affectionate salutations reveal an uncanny, instinctual intimacy. He addresses her throughout those years as "*Chère maître*" (an appellation that pays double homage to Sand by using the feminine form of the adjective before the masculine noun). Writing to him in the "*tu*" form (Flaubert, in deference to her greater age, retains the formal



"Isn't that other plane awfully close?"

"*vous*"), Sand addresses him as "*Ami de mon cœur*," "*Mon vieux chéri*," and "*Cher frère*." And, because of the trust and mutual affection established by these "old troubadours," as they refer to themselves, no subject is forbidden, no intimacy too painful to be spared.

And yet it would be hard to find two correspondents more ill-suited than Flaubert, martyr of difficulty and paragon of egotistical detachment, and Sand, who wrote with alarming facility and relished her neck-deep involvement in life. She derided Flaubert's cult of "sacrosanct literature," taking pride in the fact that she had "always loved someone more than literature, and my family more than someone." In contrast to Flaubert's terror of fathering a child and his disgust for all reproductive processes, Sand, who exulted in "the honor, the duty and burden of living," attended her young friends' lyings-in with passionate empathy, acted as midwife to her daughter-in-law, and nursed her granddaughters singlehanded through bouts of whooping cough. She supervised their every game and holiday masquerade and puppet show, made quantities of fruit jam, and gloried in the humblest maternal and domestic functions. ("I like sewing and wiping babies' bottoms," she wrote Flaubert. "I have a touch of the servant.")

But it is on the political level that the two writers were most radically at odds. Sand's supremely optimistic trust in the Will of the People led her to support most platforms of liberal thought—free compulsory education, suffrage for all male citizens over twenty-one—and it extended to an admiration for the most radical, Jacobin factions of the French Revolution. (That most fanatical contingent, she once wrote, was what made the Revolution "efficacious, providential and sublime.") Flaubert, on the other hand, saw the French Revolution as "a miscarriage, a failure, a gross blunder." He maintained that universal suffrage was "a disgrace to humanity" and an "insult to human intelligence," and favored a government of enlightened mandarins. "The people never come of age, and they will always be the bottom rung of the social scale because they represent number, mass, the limitless," he wrote Sand. "Our only salvation now lies in a *legitimate aristocracy*." The tensions between these extremes—Sand's choice of life over art and her abundant democratic optimism versus Flaubert's belief in art as the supreme priesthood and his cynical disdain of the rabble—give their correspondence its power and its beauty. Whatever their disagreements, Sand and Flaubert seldom proselytize. Rather, they defend and clarify their positions with the higher goal of making their ideals more lucid and honorable in each other's eyes.

Sand began to visit the hermit of Croisset within the first six months of their correspondence. They went sightseeing, played cards with old Mme. Flaubert, and talked after dinner until 2 A.M., at which point they raided the larder and ate some cold chicken, and talked on until four. "Very thrilled with Flaubert," Sand recorded in her diary after her first visit, and Flaubert reported to Princesse Mathilde, "Sand was as always very natural, not at all a bluestocking."

It was far harder for Sand to persuade Flaubert to visit her in Nohant than for her to visit him; he ultimately made only two trips to her home. Year after year, his procrastinations and cancellations abounded, their cited reasons strikingly similar to those repeatedly given Louise Colet when he demurred at going to see her in Paris during their affair: Maman Flaubert was ailing, and he could not leave her until she was totally well; or he must finish a difficult chapter—at least several months off—before he could permit himself to go anywhere, under the threat of breaking his creative spell.

Flaubert's views of women ran the gamut from reverent awe to a sexist disdain as virulent as can be found in the nineteenth century. On the one hand, he saw the female sex as a band of lascivious simpletons who "mistake their hearts for their cunts and think the moon was invented to light their boudoirs," and whose increasing involvement in literature was ruining nineteenth-century culture. ("Our contemporary literature is drowning in women's menses," he wrote to Louise Colet.) On the other hand, the psychology of women was an endless source of fascination and wonder to him. How else could he have created Emma Bovary? He wrote to Sand that he saw women as "the Archway to the Infinite." He was both captivated and threatened by the unity, the immersion in life and in sentiment, which he thought characteristic of the female psyche, and felt to be a great danger to male artists.

But it was precisely that capacity for wholeness and immersion—devoid of the capacity for abstraction which is essential to "true artists"—which made Flaubert sense that women provided better epistolary alter egos than male colleagues. His lifelong need for a distant woman's sympathetic ear is attested by the fact that when he resumed his affair with Colet in 1851, after a three-year hiatus, he chose to do so within a fortnight of starting to write "Madame Bovary." Less than two years after he definitively broke with Colet, he chose another female pen pal—a woman of letters and devoted fan called Marie-Sophie Leroyer de Chantepie—as his confidante. Their epistolary relationship lasted ten years, but they never met, even though Flaubert and Mlle. de Chantepie (a spinster twenty-one years his senior) both lived within hours of Paris. And Flaubert's regular exchanges with her ceased in 1866, the year his correspondence with George Sand took off in earnest. So his letters to Sand must be seen in the context of his lifelong need for some epistolary maternal presence—one that enabled him to write from a deeply female part of himself, in a rapturously intimate stream of consciousness. Such relationships worked best for Flaubert when his female correspondents remained mostly unseen, as in the patient-doctor positioning of traditional psychoanalysis.

Some of the most affecting passages in the Sand-Flaubert correspondence concern their views on sexual abstinence, on the nature of the literary vocation, and on the afterlife. Flaubert on the asceticism necessary to writers: "Artists (who are priests) risk nothing by being chaste, on the contrary!" On reincarnation: "I was boatman on the Nile, procurer in Rome at the time of the Punic wars, then Greek rhetorician in Suburra. . . . I was pirate and monk, mountebank and coachman—perhaps Emperor of the East. . . . Many things would be explained if we could know our *real* genealogy." To which Sand starkly replies, "*I* think *I* was once a plant or a stone."

Flaubert tends to whine about the infirmities of advancing years. "I've been feminized and softened by wear and tear—which harden other people," he complains, characteristically denigrating female attributes. "That makes me indignant. I feel I'm becoming bovine." In contrast, Sand's sunny, stoical acceptance of age offers some of the most consoling and beautiful passages ever written concerning the twilight years. “The thing is that when one’s old, in the sunset of one’s life—the best time for richness of colour and light—one acquires a new approach to everything, and especially to affection. . . . When you feel your own ‘self’ getting less intense, you love people and things for what they are in themselves, what they represent in the eyes of your soul, and not at all for what they will contribute to your own destiny.” And, when she was sixty-seven, “On the day I decided to put youth behind me I immediately felt twenty years younger. You’ll say the bark of the tree still has to bear the ravages of time. I don’t mind that—the core is sound and the sap goes on doing its work, as in the old apple trees in my garden; the more gnarled they grow the more fruit they bear.” In 1876, she wrote her “darling troubadour,” “Before long, you will gradually be entering upon the happiest and most propitious part of life: old age. It’s then that art reveals itself in all its sweetness; in our youth it manifests itself in anguish.”

“MADAME SAND has written me a desperate letter,” Flaubert wrote to Princesse Mathilde in 1871, upon the advent of the Paris Commune. “She sees that her old ideal was hollow, and her republican faith seems completely extinguished. That’s a disaster that won’t befall me.” The onset of the Franco-Prussian War, the partial occupation of France by German troops, and the tragedy of the Paris Commune created a dramatic break in the Sand-Flaubert correspondence. These events, particularly the Commune, were even harder on Sand than on Flaubert. In the late spring of 1871, when the aftermath of the Commune turned into a bloodbath, there was a note of triumph in Flaubert’s critique of Sand’s optimism and her love of humanity, which had always led Flaubert to judge her “a bit ‘too benevolent and benign,” and to plead that she get off her “socialist-hobbyhorse.” “Ah, chère bon maître, if you could only hate! That is what you lack: Hate. . . . You have seen the world through a golden haze. That comes from the sun in your heart. But so many shadows have loomed that you no longer see things for what they are. Come, now! Shout! Thunder!”

Although the brutality of the “official” French government forces was far more

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vicious and extensive than that of the Paris Communards, Sand, to the astonishment of her liberal friends, did shout and thunder against the Commune. She who had "loved the proletariat and dreamed only of its future" was now fulminating against "the vile excesses of the Commune . . . which call for . . . forcing the charming proletariat created by the Empire to realize what's possible and what isn't." Commenting on the burning of Paris resorted to by the Communards to retard the advance of the government troops, she judged them to be "a lair of bandits," who "have ruined and will continue to ruin the republic, exactly as the priests have ruined Christianity." Flaubert, of course, agreed. "In my opinion the entire Commune should have been sent to the galleys," he wrote to Sand, "and the bloodthirsty fools chained by the neck like common criminals and made to clean up the ruins of Paris."

FLAUBERT'S two visits to Nohant took place at Christmas, 1869, the year before the outbreak of the war, and in 1873, three years before Sand's death. During the first stay, Flaubert dressed like a woman and performed the cachucha, a Spanish dance. "It was grotesque, everyone went wild," Sand reported in her diary. On his next visit, he dressed like a woman again and danced the fandango, and this time he eroded Sand's patience. "Flaubert . . . was very lively and funny, but he monopolized the conversation, and Turgenev, who's much more interesting, could hardly get a word in," she noted in her journal. "My dear Flaubert . . . has left me absolutely exhausted. . . . I love him dearly, and he's an excellent man, but his personality is too excitable." Flaubert, for his part, commented to Princesse Mathilde in 1872 that Madame Sand's "perpetual pious optimism . . . sometimes sets my teeth on edge."

By this time, there is an increasingly critical tone in Sand's letters to Flaubert; yet it is not expressed out of spite or disillusionment. It seems incited, rather, by her judgment that her beloved friend's central tragedy was his sacrifice of life to art—by her sense of Flaubert's increasingly pathetic solitude, and perhaps by premonitions of her own approaching end. These exchanges provide her most severe and most sublime pages, for Flaubert's condition, in this last decade of his own life, was far more pitiful than Sand's. By 1874, he had been deeply affected by the loss of his mother and also of his closest friends—Louis Bouilhet, Sainte-Beuve, Jules de Goncourt, Théophile Gautier. ("I'm crammed with coffins, like an old cemetery," he wrote. "I've had enough of that.") The reception of the two books he had published in that decade, "A Sentimental Education" and "The Temptation of Saint Anthony," was predominantly hostile, and a play he had insisted on staging in Paris—his first—was an unmitigated disaster. Trying to bring Flaubert out of his funk, Sand suggests that he has lived too much for himself, beseeches him to work less and to steep himself more in life. "I beg *you* not to be so absorbed in literature and learning. Travel, move about, have mistresses—or wives, just as you like; and during such phases, don't work. One shouldn't burn the candle at both ends; the thing is to light each end [and turn it] about."

Recommending that Flaubert get married, Sand continues, "How shall I put it? Living for oneself is a bad thing." She goes on, "The keenest intellectual pleasure comes from being able to return to the self after being absent from it for a spell. But living all the time inside the self, that most tyrannical, demanding and capricious of companions—no, one shouldn't do it. Please, please listen to me! You're keeping an exuberant nature shut up in jail!"

"I'm too old. And also too decent to inflict myself on another in perpetuity," Flaubert replies petulantly. "Deep down, there's something of the priest in me that no one suspects."

From 1870 to 1872, when Flaubert and Sand hardly managed to see each other, their dialogue on life versus art became increasingly direct, heart-baring. "My ambition has never flown as high as yours," Sand wrote. "You want to write for all time; I think I shall be completely forgotten, perhaps severely denigrated, in fifty years' time. . . . I have never thought my work was of the highest order. What I've tried to do is rather to act upon my contemporaries, even if I influence only a few, and make them share my idea of goodness and poetry."

It is perhaps through the influence of this magnanimous woman—who never stinted on self-sacrifice or on civic duty, who plunged into existence as boldly as she swam in the icy stream below her house when it was too cold for the rest of her family—that Flaubert in his last years began to regret the ascetic egotism that had marked his life. He expressed his admiration for Sand's serenity. She answered, "It doesn't come from my character, but from my need, now, to think only of others." In the same letter she added, "You've missed having children. That's the punishment of those who want to be too independent." And that led Flaubert, eventually, to the bluntest, most anguished confessions of his life: "I have always lived from day to day . . . pursuing my goal—my only goal—literature—looking neither to the left nor right! Everything that existed around me has disappeared, and I find myself in a desert." A few months later, he sent greetings to Sand's granddaughters: "*Embrassez bien fort pour moi les chères petites*. Ah! If I had one of my own to hug! [Your son] has the right idea! He arranged his life well. Why didn't I do the same?"

"We are of nature, in nature, through nature, and for nature," Sand wrote Flaubert just after her seventieth birthday. "You forget there's something higher than art—wisdom," she wrote six months later, a year and a half before her death, with that mystical serenity which led her friends to call her Sainte Tranquille. "And art, at its greatest, is nothing but the expression of wisdom. Wisdom . . . teaches us to see something outside ourselves that is higher than what is within us, and gradually, through contemplation and admiration, to come to resemble it."

However much greater Flaubert's six books of fiction were than Sand's several dozen, however more monumental his artistic gift to posterity, in such passages Sand may have had the last word. Ultimately, her life—her growth in self-knowledge and compassion, and in the capacity to face death without an ounce of regret—was far more fulfilled than her friend's. More poignantly than any other document concerning the life and the genius of Gustave Flaubert, this extraordinary correspondence has to do with the mystery of creativity, with the enigma of personality, with the alchemy of survival. It allows each of us to answer these riddles according to our own obsessions, sorrows, triumphs, failures. ◆

BOOKS BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

The Kommandant's Mistress
by Sherri Szeman
(HarperCollins; $17.50)

Max von Walther, who narrates the opening section of this hallucinatory novel, is the senior Nazi commander of a concentration camp. Rachel Levi, the second narrator, is the beautiful Jewish woman von Walther selects from among the doomed to keep in a corner of his office. She sits on the floor, silent and motionless; von Walther does not know that she understands German. Much of Szeman's book pivots on the terrible power of words: after the war, Rachel begins to write her way out of the past, but the author turns language inside out to remind us of its treacherous ambiguities, as when von Walther's wife, Marta, asks him, "How will you take care of the girl?" The story cuts back and forth through time without warning, often in mid-conversation; von Walther's little daughter complains that the Jew-gas is giving her a headache—just before Marta confronts him, years later, with Rachel's first book. Surprisingly, any moral queasiness engendered by this daring first novel comes not so much from the treatment of the obsessive relationship at its center, which is neither sentimental nor pornographic, as from this intoxicating narrative trick. The characters are trapped by the memories that rise up to obliterate the present, but the reader is liberated from the start, exempted from experiencing their lives chronologically. This exemption, this skipping from one horror to the next, provides a guilty, addictive thrill; it's like slipping the noose, again and again and again.

Time Remaining
by James McCourt
(Knopf; $21)

This extended novella is a roman à clef of drag-queen New York and a valiant and haughty reminiscence of the elder generation among the AIDS dead. Its narrators are Delancey, a fortyish performance artist, and Danny (Odette) O'Doyle, a cabaret goddess and Normandy veteran, the two surviving members of a circle of friends who called themselves the Eleven against Heaven and gave each other camp names like Miss Mercedes Benzedrine and Miss Faith Healy. Most of the book is taken up with Odette O'Doyle's Homeric narration of his pilgrimage to the cultural capitals of Europe, where he spread the ashes of the nine departed friends and commemorated their singularity. More essentially, it is a feast of high gossip about opera, divas, movies, poetry, art, gay politics, and Continental travel. Its style is intricately indirect and cliquish—"a crossword puzzle that is its own solution" is how Delancey puts it—and its tone is warmly, gorgeously sad.

GENERAL

Broken Lives: Separation and Divorce in England 1660-1857
by Lawrence Stone
(Oxford; $35)

This absorbing third volume of Stone's trilogy on marriage and separation has the rare appeal of casting a rosy glow over the present. Whatever else divorce means today, it's nothing if not legally expedient and socially accepted; in early modern England, divorce was often the most agonizing stage of marital misery. Drawing on the rich documentation accompanying the suits of the wealthy, Stone sets the usual causes of private anguish against a labyrinthine legal system that guaranteed no one complete freedom, and often left wives and husbands—particularly, and punishingly, wives—"ruined in both character and fortune." But most compelling here is the way the details of daily life unite the familiar with the strange. A teen-age girl's banal drinking parties have far from banal consequences in the context of her union, at fourteen, with a near-lunatic twenty years her senior; a husband's alleged impotence is put to public test; a lonely wife's infatuation with the stableman blasts not just her affectionate family but numerous servants' careers. Fortunately, Stone's prose is lively and lucid, and buoys up these grim and tangled tales.

The Man Who Stayed Behind
by Sidney Rittenberg and Amanda Bennett
(Simon & Schuster; $25)

The lively memoirs of an American Communist who joined the Chinese Communists in the caves of Yanan just after the Second World War. He was welcomed as a comrade until 1949, when he was arrested and accused of espionage; he was imprisoned, and spent more than a year alone in a completely dark cell. In 1955, he was released, with apologies; his Party membership restored and his faith in Communism unimpaired, Rittenberg enthusiastically participated in the Hundred Flowers campaign, the Great Leap Forward, and the Cultural Revolution, until, in 1968, he was arrested again. This time, he spent nearly ten years in prison, and, not surprisingly, perhaps, he, his Chinese wife, and their children now live in the United States. The book is a striking self-portrait of a true believer—Rittenberg is a living demonstration that intelligence is no cure for naïveté—and a marvellously enlightening account of everyday life in China during Mao's reign.

Looking for the Klondike Stone
by Elizabeth Arthur
(Knopf; $23)

In this enchanting memoir, Arthur recalls her childhood summers at a camp in Vermont, evoking the passions of youth, the routines of camping, and the sense of place. Readers will recognize bits of their own childhoods, and one-time campers will remember their own interests (in Indian lore, say) and fears (of horses, maybe, or the dark), but there's more to the book than that. Camp Wynakee, where the author spent the blissful months she recounts, was the creation of a remarkably imaginative couple whose feeling for children and for child development shaped a little universe where exploration, excitement, and growth were inescapable, where children were challenged without being threatened. So this narrative of children's delights—campfires, woodland hikes—in a lovely landscape is also a collection of lessons on how to be parents and teachers. ♦

SHOUTS AND MURMURS

TERMS OF OFFICE

BY BOBBIE ANN MASON

Q: Mr. President, in a recent news conference you used the rather colorful expression "He doesn't know me from Adam's off ox." Senator Dole alleges there is no such term and says you employed this "pseudo-colloquialism" (he also called it a "Gergenism") as a calculated attempt to sound "down-home" in order to woo back Southern Democrats who have deserted you. Would you care to comment, sir?

A: Yes, Brit, I'd be glad to clarify that allusion. In a team of oxen, the "off" one is the one farther away from the driver—that is, to the right. So if our ancestor Adam is far back in memory his off ox is even farther away—but maybe not as far right as Senator Dole. When I left Arkansas to attend Oxford as a Rhodes Scholar, people back home would ask my mother where I was, and she would tell them I was off. Off at Oxford. I could have said he didn't know me from Adam's hatband, or Adam's pet monkey, Adam's brother, his brag dog, his chief communications officer—whatever. We use lots of these sayings in Arkansas, but you don't know split beans from coffee about Arkansas, do you?

Q (follow-up): Sir, isn't this another example of what your critics call Slick Willie waffling—claiming to be both an Oxonian and a good old boy?

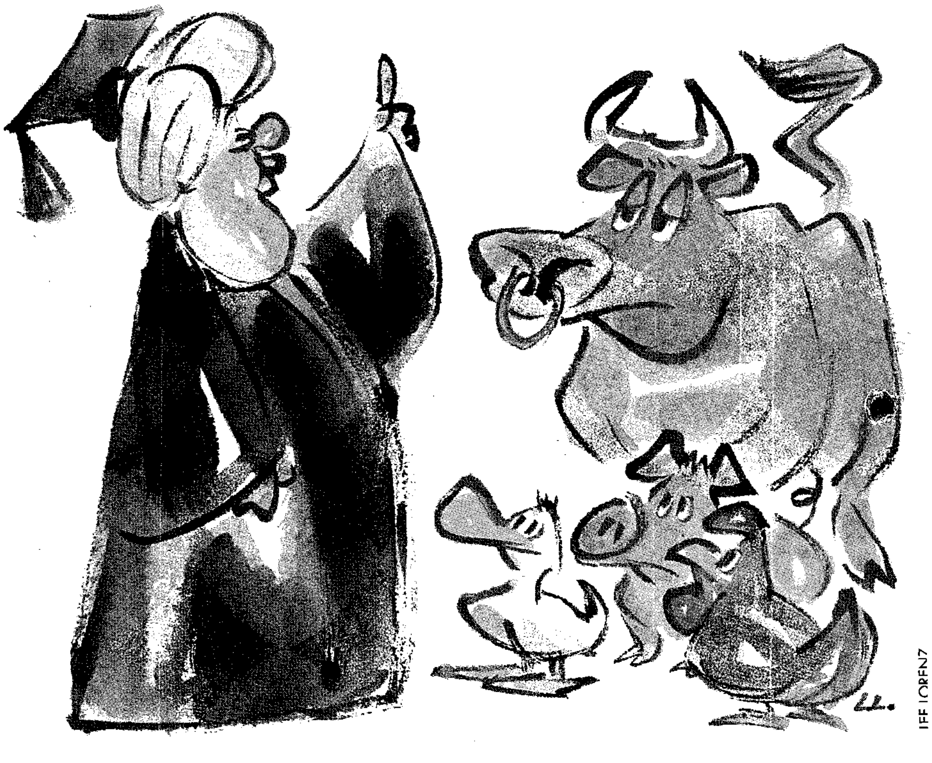
A: Brit, let me say that "Adam's off ox" is heard chiefly west of the Appalachians, according to the Dictionary of American Regional English. In the Northeast, there are only two lonely spots where the D.A.R.E. maps the usage of "Adam's off ox"—one in upstate New York and one in Massachusetts.

We have a language gap. Let me point out that I wouldn't naturally say, "He doesn't know me from Adam's off bull." When I was coming up in Hope, we didn't say "bull" in mixed company. We said "he-cow." A bull was a gentleman cow, or a male cow, or a top cow. Up here inside the Beltway, you call a bull a bull, and you call bull "bull." In the South, we have an expression for people who do that. We say, "He's a person who says what he thinks." And it's not necessarily a compliment.

What you call "waffling" is just good manners back home. I was taught to say "he-cow." And we didn't say "rooster." We said "chicken," or "he-chicken." Schoolteachers would speak of "the he" and "the she" and "girl birds" and "boy birds." People never said "cock" in public. Any word with "cock" in it was taboo. They'd say "hoe handle." Why, some Southerners still won't say "the clap." They say "the collapse." Some old-timers back home still can't bring themselves to say my brother's name, Roger. "Roger" used to be a dirty word. A verb.

But yesterday's gone. Now you can say "bullshit," and it doesn't even mean anything. Let me just say this: The trait of being inoffensive in mixed company is a major strength of this Presidency. You see, the whole world now is mixed company. It's an advantage that the President of the United States is in the habit of spontaneously blurting out obscure regional metaphors that wouldn't make ladies blush a century ago. I expect to do more of it.

Hey, I just got here and I've got a lot to learn. I know the Presidency is more than knitting cat fur into kitten britches. That reminds me—I could have said, earlier, "He doesn't know me from Adam's house cat." And it might interest you to know that Adam's house cat was called Nethergarment. A polite term for britches. Why, I know folks who won't even say the word "socks." ♦



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